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MINING IN THE FAIRBANKS DISTRICT, 1960

Alaska Resources, Inc.

Alaska Resources, Inc, under the management of James Donovan, mined and sold peat from two pits near Fox. Pit No. 1 is on the right limit of Goldstream Creek on ground leased from the United States Smelting Refining and Mining Co. near the place where the Fairbanks Meridian crosses Goldstream valley. During the summer, Pit No. 2 was opened on ground purchased from the USSR&M Co. on the right limit of Goldstream about 200 yards east of the Elliott Highway. A Terratrac tractor equipped with front-end loader is used for mining: the deposit is frozen, and the peat is mined in layers to take advantage of solar thawing, however, the loader is able to scrape up about 2 inches of frozen peat in a single pass, therefore, it is possible to do some mining ahead of the thawing when necessary. A hammer-mill-type ensilage shredder is used for shredding the peat, and a small portable conveyor is used for stockpiling and loading. During the first part of the season, a belt conveyor was rented, and , later, a chain-flight conveyor was built on the property and put into use.

Peat was offered for sale at the pit or delivered, pit-run or shredded; it was used in the Fairbanks area for gardens and for landscaping. The company plans to stockpile shredded peat during the Fall of 1960 and to package it in paper bags during the winter for shipment to the Anchorage area next summer. The company also has long-range plans to develop other uses for the peat.

Arctic Alaska Fisheries and Enterprises, Inc.

This company, under the management of John Sheldon and Roudolph and Adolph Vetter, continued exploration and mining on gold lodes near the Fairbanks-Wolf Creek divide. The company now has leases on the Cleary Hill property, the Nordale group, and the McCarty group in addition to owning outright several claims in the area. This year the company purchased a new gasoline-powered International T-340 tractor equipped with backhoe and bulldozer, and a used TD-24 International tractor with bulldozer. The mining was done by uncovering the vein with the TD-24 then excavating the top of the vein with the backhoe.

The vein being mined is on the north slope of the ridge on the south side of Wolf Creek; thus far, all the mining has been done on the Nordale group. The strike of the vein varies from place to place, but in general it is east-west. The dip is 55 to 70 degrees south, into the ridge. Width of the vein is one to four feet. Only the top 10 to 15 feet of the vein is mined; generally, this much of the vein is soft enough to be dug without drilling and blasting. The backhoe dumps into a truck, and the ore is hauled to the Cleary Hill mill via the Fairbanks Creek road and the Steese Highway. The milling equipment used includes a jaw crusher, 5-stamp mill, amalgamation plates, and a Wilfley table. Five hundred tons of ore was mined and milled during the year.

Exploration, in the form of trenching with the bulldozer, was done on the extensions of the vein being mined and at various places on other veins in the area. The company plans to do some underground work on the Nordale group during the winter of 1960-61.

Fig.1. Mining and shredding peat at Pit No. 2, Alaska Resources, Inc.

Tury Anderson and Associates.

Tury Anderson and associates made an operating agreement with the Fairbanks Mining Co. of Alaska for mining and milling ore at the Silvertone prospect. The Fairbanks Mining Co. of Alaska did a small amount of exploration work at the Lookout Mine in 1957. In 1960, some work was done on the Silvertone property preparatory to installing a mill, and, according to the plans, the mill is to be installed during 1961.

K-49-15

Fig. 2. T-340 tractor with blade and backhoe.

Fig. 3. Looking west along site of mining operations on the Nordale group.

Fig. 4. Looking east along site of mining operations on the Nordale group.

Fig. 5. Shaft headframe, American Eagle vein, erected by USSR&M Co.

Fig. 6. Open pit on the Nordale group. View looking west from the head of Wolf Creek.

Chatham Creek Mining Co.

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The Chatham Creek Mining Co. moved from Last Chance Creek to the upper part of Ready Bullion Creek near Ester and mined on ground leased from Harold Hassel. Early in August they were working on the second cut of the season just below the fork in the upper part of the creek. They pushed to the head of the boxes with a bulldozer, washed the gravel through the boxes with a nozzle, and stacked tailing with a dragline. Some permafrost was encountered unexpectedly in the second cut. Return water was pumped from a settling pond below the site of the mining. Only a small trickle of fresh water was

Fig. 7. Mining operations of the Chatham Creek Mining Co. on Ready Bullion Creek.

flowing in the creek, and they were able to sluice only three hours per day. The partners -Berg, Tweiten, and Wickstrom - operate the mine without employing any additional help.

Fig. 8. Stripped ground, right limit fork, head of Ready Bullion Creek.

Chena Mining Co.

The Chena Mining Co, operated by J. W. "Bill" Pinto and Carl Poorman, mined during the year on upper Dome Creek on ground leased from the United States Smelting Refining and Mining Co. A bulldozer was used for mining and stacking tailing, and a sluice-plate was used at the head of the boxes.

Hassel Mining Co.

The Hassel Mining Co, owned and operated by Harold Hassel, curtailed operations considerably this year. After leasing the upper part of Ready Bullion Creek to the Chatham Creek Mining Co, Hassel moved his equipment to the lower part of the creek, where he did some preparatory work and may have done a small amount of mining. No employees were hired.

Kupoff and Lazeration.

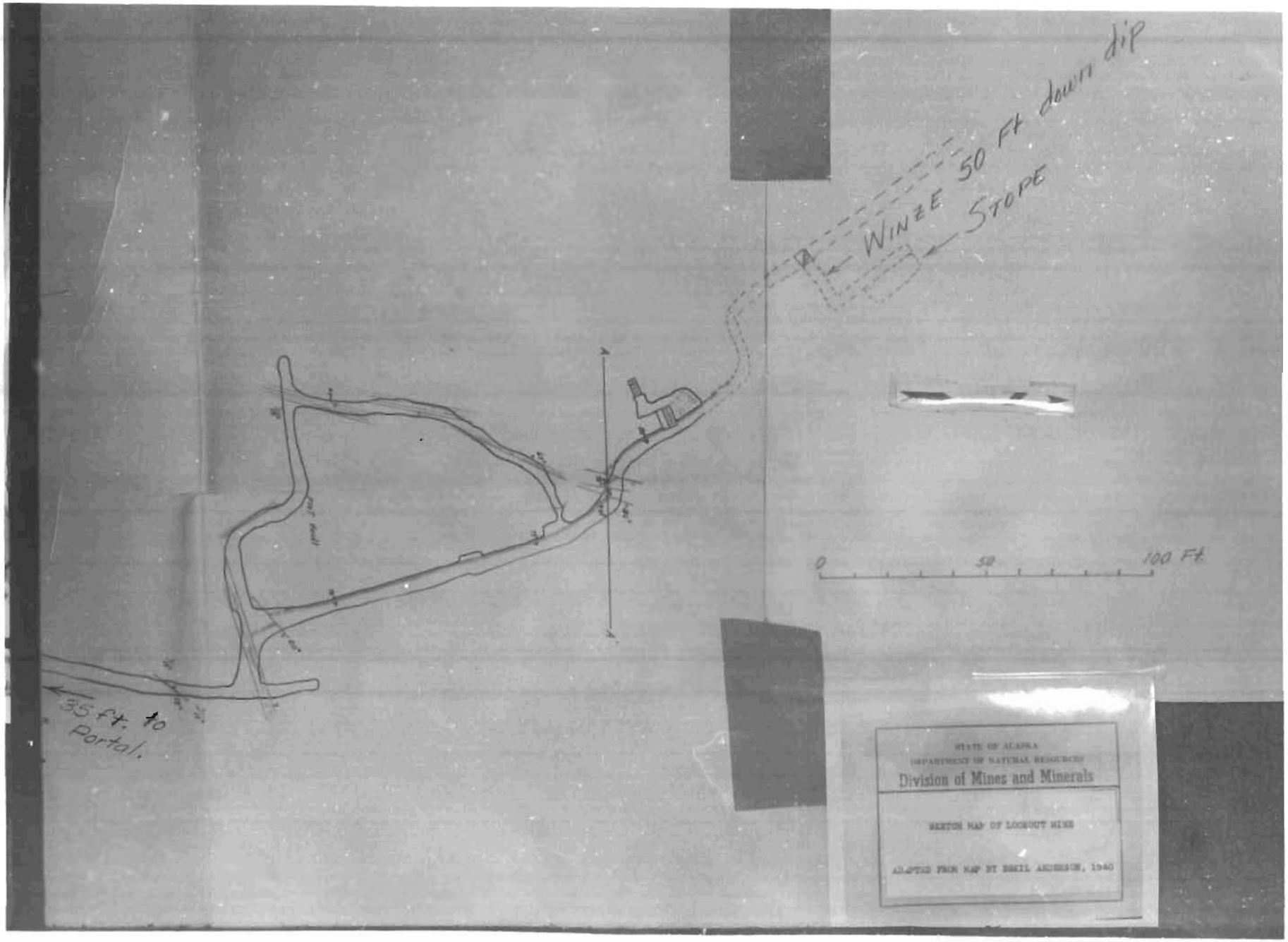
Nick Kupoff and Charles Lazeration mined during the summer on Pedro Creek at its junction with Twin Creek on ground owned by Kupoff. They used a D-8 Caterpillar tractor to push gravel to the boxes and to stack tailing. A nozzle is used at the head of the boxes. The sluice box is of wood; steel-rail riffles are installed in the head of the box, and wooden riffles capped with steel strips are used in the lower end. In August they were mining the second cut of the season. Kx49-57

The ground being mined is in the center of the Pedro Creek valley. It was drift-mined in the early days, and, later, ground adjacent to it on both sides of the valley was mined mechanically by A. A. Zimmerman. Above the junction with Twin Creek, Zimmerman mined in the center of the valley, and the present operators think that there may be some side pay left underneath tailing piles for about one claim length above their workings. Kx49-209, 223

At the site of the present operations, the gravel probably was 5 to 6 feet deep originally, but much of it was removed by drift-mining, and the old drifts became filled with silt. The material being mined is mostly silt, boulders, and bedrock. The boulders are large enough and numerous enough to make mining difficult. Water is pumped from a pond above the workings; there is an ample supply of water. Kx49-57

Fig. 9. Site of Kupoff and Lazeration mining operation on Pedro Creek. Mouth of Twin Creek on the left.

Fig 10. Sluicebox, Kupoff and Lazeration mine.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STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Mines and Minerals
SKETCH MAP OF LOCKOUT MINE
ADAPTED FROM MAP BY EBEIL ANDERSON, 1940

Fig. 11.

Lookout Mine.

Work was done intermittently throughout the summer at the Lookout Mine on Emma Creek near Ester by "Bumps" Turnbarge, the owner, and Bill Hewitt, his partner. Early in the summer a high-grade sample was reported to have been taken from the underhand stope north of the 50-ft winze shown on the map, however, other samples from the same place assayed much lower. Mining practice that has been followed in mining the underhand stope would preclude the mining of anything other than exceptionally high-grade ore. The ore is shoveled into a common water bucket; the bucket is pulled to the drift 15 feet above by hand with a rope, carried to the winze, and dumped into a round bucket that slides on poles in the winze; the round bucket is pulled up the winze by a hand windlass, and the ore is dumped into a car to be trammed to the mill. K158-117

The mill is a two-stamp mill that has a capacity of about one-half ton per hour; the stamps weigh 1350 pounds each. A 40-mesh screen is used. Pulp from the mill flows over an amalgamation plate. The mill is powered by a Fairbanks Morse 7½-hp gasoline engine. The mill is in a shed that is partly closed in, but it is not protedted from the weather sufficiently to permit operation during the winter.

Olive Creek Mines.

Olive Creek Mines, under the management of Carl Parker, continued mining on Eva Creek on ground owned by the U. S. Smelting Refining and Mining Co. In August it became necessary to stop mining in order to strip muck at the upper limit of the water stripping that was done by U. S. Smelting. The muck was stripped by bulldozers and was pushed downstream until it tumbled down the face into the last cut. A nozzle at the bottom of the face washed 58-137 209 245

the muck into the drain.

Carl Parker reported that the USSR&M Co. had stopped hydraulic stripping because the water duty became extremely low. The muck contained considerable clay that have it a rubber-like texture when it became saturated with water. The muck that had settled near the head of the drain would appear to move when it was struck by the stream from the nozzle, then it would appear to spring back to its original position after the stream had passed over it.

It was planned that mining would be resumed in the latter part of August. In mining, two bulldozers are used to push gravel to the wings; a nozzle is used to wash the gravel through the boxes; and a dragline is used for stacking tailing. Water for the operation is pumped from Ester Creek.

United States Smelting Refining and Mining Co.

The USSR&M Co. operated four dredges in the Fairbanks district in 1960: Dredge 2 at Fairbanks Creek, Dredge 3 at Chatanika, Dredge 6 at Sheep Creek, and Dredge 10 at Cripple Creek. All of these dredges should complete their operations within the next three or four years.

Other operations.

During the year there was some prospecting and claim staking on Nugget Creek, tributary to Smallwood Creek. The Wolf Creek Mining Co. continued mining as in 1959 on ground leased from the USSR&M Co. on Fish Creek. Ernest Maurer continued mining on First Chance Creek as in previous years. The Alder Creek Mining Co. did not operate nor did the Gold Stream Mining Co.

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Panoramic view of conveyor system assembled by the USSR and M Company operations for overburden removal in the Cripple Subsection, Fairbanks District, circa 1940. The ~~this~~ unusual extraction procedure was required because of the extreme thickness (300 ft) of barren muck and gravels that overlied the rich gold bearing zone later mined by the Company's dredge #10 (the pride of the fleet) from 1940-1964. Photo by R. H. Saunders. (Taken from Itinerary Report [IR] 58-2.)

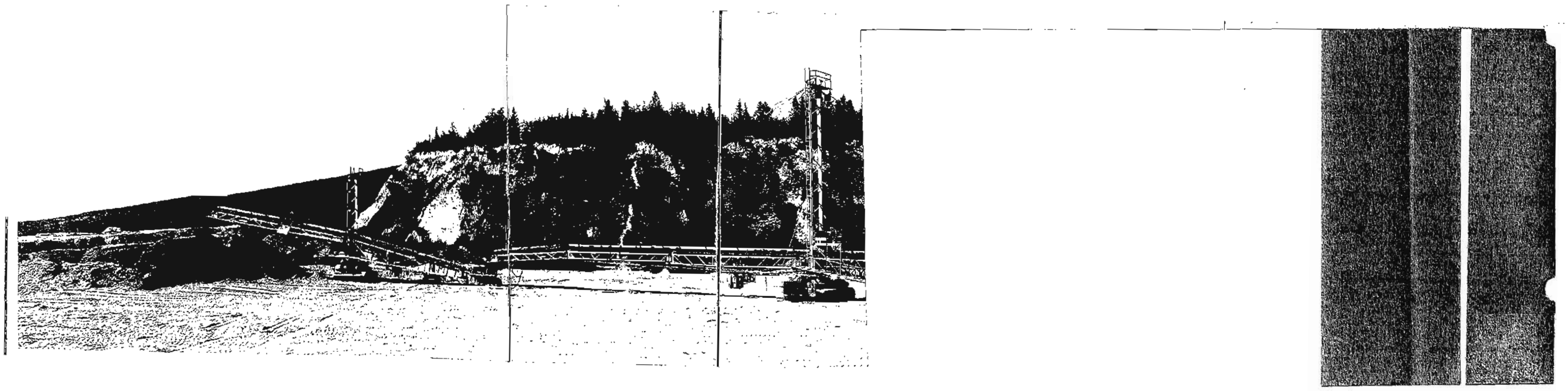

Fig. 12. Dragline and conveyor belt used for stripping barren gravel ahead of Dredge 10 on Cripple Creek.

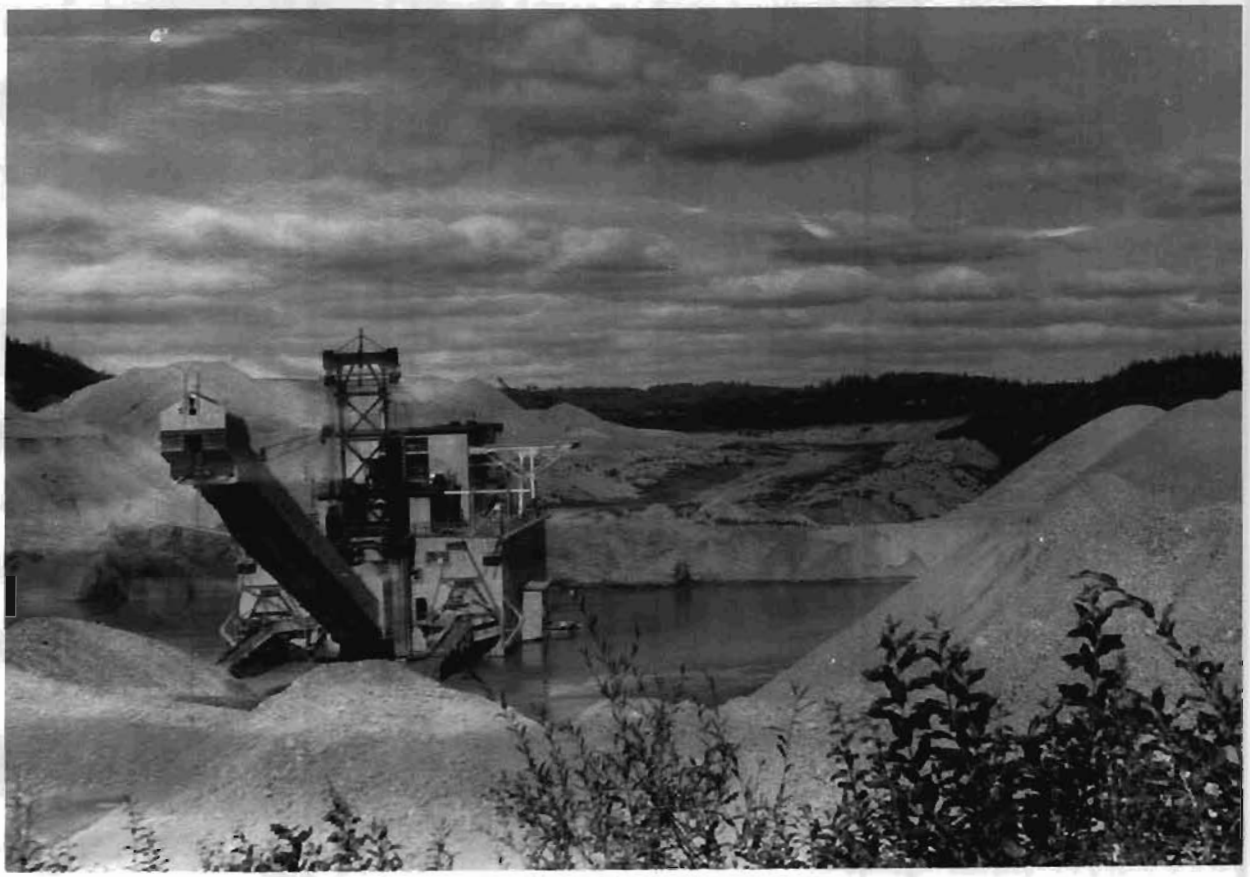

Fig. 13. Dredge 10 on Cripple Creek. Stripping of barren gravel has been completed in the cut ahead of the dredge. The dragline in the distance is stripping in the area where the dredge will complete it digging program.

College, Alaska
October, 1960

Robert H. Saunders
State Mining Engineer

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Fig. 12. Dragline and conveyor belt used for stripping barren gravel ahead of Dredge 10 on Cripple Creek.