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TERRITORY OF ALASKA  
 DEPARTMENT OF MINES  
 JUNEAU, ALASKA

Report of Mining Investigations in the  
 Wade-Hampton Precinct

By  
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The mining operations in the Wade-Hampton precinct consist of two draglines, one hydraulic-bulldozer, and one shovel-in. The Ericson operation on Elephant Creek was unable to resume due to Army acquisition during the war of the dragline and bulldozers. Production of gold in this precinct for the year will be considerably below the pre-war average. While the number of operations are the same, the new Wade-Hampton Mining Company is below the old Ericson in productive capacity. River freight was over two months late on the Yukon River this season from Nenana. This delay is attributed to the longshoremen's strike, and the new policy of freight distribution on the river boats of carrying freight for one or two ports per trip. The new washing plant of Johnson and Ostness was not delivered until late July, which reduces the production of this company by two months. Repair parts and supplies needed during the operating season have to be transported by plane due to the lack of definite schedules of the river boats. This has created a much higher transportation cost in the district.

A shortage of labor was very evident in the region, since the small native population moves down the river for the fishing season, and very few whites live in the area. Nearly all the labor hired in the district has to be brought in from outside by plane. The wage scale is \$1.32 per hour for common labor and \$2 per hour for dragline and caterpillar operators. This scale was the highest encountered during the season.

The Johnson and Ostness operation is mining on Mr. Marsh's ground on the Erke Bench Claim. This deposit is in part creek and part residual. The gold occurs in clay mixed with angular lava rocks and on top of small porphyry sills intruded into black shales. Both the clay and the ~~and the~~ rocks are highly stained with iron oxides. The depth ranges from 16 to 20 feet with the gravel, rocks and clay unsorted over this depth. The gold deposition appears to have taken place in the clay, gravel and rock mixture from percolating spring solutions, which also accounts for the heavy deposition of iron oxides. The clay contained in this mixture has involved a problem in gold recovery in past operations. The present new washing plant, built on the same principle as a dredge, may be the solution to this problem. The plant had operated only one day prior to the writer's visit, and the diesel power unit which operates the generator, which in turn furnishes electricity for the plant, burned out bearings and crankshaft. This washing plant was built by Washington Iron Works.

Following are some specifications: Weight 70 tons mounted on caterpillar tracks, rated capacity 150 yards per hour, 70-foot stacker, 5-foot trommel screen with mesh of 3/8 to 3/4-inch, elevator for fines from the sluices, grizzly over hopper with automatic dump, 4 nozzles to break up material in the hopper, and nozzles inside of screen. The plant uses 4500 gallons per minute from pipe line with low pressure. Gold saving devices consist of seven sluice boxes 12 feet long with steel hungarian riffles, and with mercury in the first set of riffles in each box. All moving parts are operated by electric motor, with electricity supplied by D-13000 Caterpillar direct-connected to 125 H. P. generator, a separate unit, and connected to washing plant with cable.

The Wade Hampton Mining Company is a new partnership, which has leased the Andrew Egar ground on Disappointment Creek. The operation is a hydraulic-bulldozer, which began mining on the date of visit. The partners are T. Peterkin and Son, O. P. and J. W. Chellson, and R. R. Lowther, who are operating without any hired help. They intend to drill Disappointment Creek. This creek was found in the past to contain some pay. Geologically, it heads off the same small soda granite opposite from the head of Willow Creek. This company is somewhat inexperienced in placer mining, but appears to have good financial connections at Anchorage.

The operation of the Yukon Mining Company was not visited due to persistent fog. This is a dragline operation headed by Joe Ramstad and employs a total of eight men. This season the company is mining on lower Kako. Mining did not get under way until in August due to late arrival of the river freight boats.

Jim Douglas was found to be shoveling-in on claim No. 4 Above Discovery on upper Willow.

Geo. M. Pilher is continuing his thirty-five years of prospecting on Elephant Creek. He reports that he has two good claims, which he is holding for his two daughters and for mining after the next war, when he claims gold mining will be good again.

PLACER OPERATIONS IN THE WADE HAMPTON PRECINCT  
OF THE SECOND DIVISION IN 1946

<u>Dragline Operations</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>No. Men</u>
Johnson & Ostness	Willow Creek	12
Yukon Mining Co.	Kako Creek	8
 <u>Bulldozer-Hydraulic Operation</u>		
Wade Hampton Mining Co.	Disappointment Creek, trib. of Wilson Creek	5
 <u>Hydraulic, Shovel-in, etc.</u>		
Jim Douglas	Upper Willow	1
 <u>Drilling &amp; Prospecting</u>		
U. S. S. R. & M. Co. expected to drill this season on Bonicilla Creek near Stuyahok - 40 claims located.		
Geo. M. Pilher	Elephant Creek	$\frac{1}{27}$

COSTS IN THE WADE HAMPTON PRECINCT IN 1946

Freight - Seattle to Seward, Seward to Nenana, Nenana to Marshall:  
Classified freight - \$60 to \$300 per ton  
Machinery rate, special - \$ 80 " "

Diesel oil per bbl. at Marshall - \$18 - \$20  
Diesel oil, pre-war cost - 27¢ gal.

Wages:

Dragline - \$2.00 per hour  
Caterpillar 2.00 " "  
Other labor 1.32 " "

2 - 10-hr. shifts  
\$3.50 per day board.