

INDEX

Coal	1
Antimony	1
Arsenic	2
Nixon Fork Mine	3
Oil	3
Clay	4
Copper	4
Fire	5

#8

Field
1926

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER DISTRICT, ALASKA

The following is a report of observations not generally included in other reports of the Kuskokwim River District.

COAL

An occurrence of coal has been reported by Mr. Bishop, of Sleitmate, at the mouth of the Holitna River. Upon visiting the locality a number of timbers were seen protruding from slide rock on the bank of the Kuskokwim River. The rocks in the locality are sandstones and shales. A number of pieces of carbonaceous shale were found near the tunnel site which, in all probability, represented the coal found. The length of the tunnel was reported a few feet.

See tunnel #2

Coal has been reported on the Big River, above McGrath, by Mr. Harry Buggee. Mr. E. W. Parks reported the finding of a vein of coal on Swift River but no confirmation of the report could be had from others in the vicinity. Mr. Jack Smeaton of Sleitmate reported that the Revenue Cutter Bear took 90 sacks of coal from the deposit on Nelson Island some years ago.

ANTIMONY

There is an unprospected occurrence of antimony on the west slope of Cripple Mountain. The outcrops are reached by trail from the town of Cripple on the Innoko River. Cripple is accessible by small boat, in summer, from Holy Cross on the Yukon River. The distance from Cripple to the prospects is approximately fifteen miles. Antimony

Opbir 6A

in the form of stibnite occurs near the heads of Wyoming, Colorado, Cripple, and Eldorado Creeks. Cripple Mountain is composed mainly of monzonite. The stibnite occurs associated with some quartz near the contact of the monzonite and the sediments. Cinnabar has been reported along the walls of these veins.

¹⁸⁷⁵ Stibnite occurs in association with the quicksilver ores of the Kuskokwim River Region. The main occurrence is located near the foot of Barometer Mountain, eighteen miles above Georgetown, on the Kuskokwim River on claims held by Mr. E. W. Parks. Mr. W. J. Cribbee, of Sleitmute, reports a discovery of cinnabar and stibnite in this locality. The stibnite at the Parks Barometer Prospect is associated with cinnabar and realgar in a gangue of crushed country rock with some quartz. Barometer Mountain is an intrusive of monzonite in the sediments, a characteristic of the antimony ores of this district.

*Ophir 67
Ladikarad 73*

Stibnite is found with cinnabar in the Parks, and Fuller & Willis Prospects on the opposite side of the Kuskokwim River from Barometer Mountain. No realgar occurs in the last named prospects.

Mr. George Hoffman at Napamute, Kuskokwim River, Alaska, reports an occurrence of stibnite on Billie K. Creek near Napamute. Surface showings of arsenopyrite and stibnite, changing to chalcopyrite at depth, are reported in the Russian Mountains.

ARSENIC

Mr. Chris Bets, Russian Mission, Yukon River, Alaska, has an arsenic prospect on the Quinhag River. An occurrence of arsenic was

200

FRANK JOAQUIN
GANES CREEK
TOKOTNA, ALASKA

Large deposit of Arsenic ore (Sulphide
of arsenic) located about 50 miles east of
Bethel on Eek River, a tributary of the
Kuskokwim River.

Samples of this ore assayed shows 70% pure.

Frank Joaquin

Bethel 91

held at one time by Mr. Frank Joaquin, of Takotna, on Rainy Creek, a tributary to the north fork of the Eek River. No details are available concerning these occurrences. A letter has been written to Mr. Carl Lottsfelt, Superintendent of the Alaska Road Commission at Takotna, with the request to interview Mr. Joaquin regarding these occurrences.

NIXON FORK MINE KX 65-6

Madison 65

The Nixon Fork Mine has been leased by Charles Messfeldt, Dolf Messfeldt, Wano Pontella, and Leo Rodrigue. The summer was spent in road construction and repair between the mine and mill. As soon as horses are available for hauling, about the middle of September, as much ore as possible will be taken out before freezeup. The mine is to operate during the winter.

OIL

Russell Mission 81

No oil seepages have been reported from the Kuskokwim River District. Mr. Hirsh, engineer for the New York Alaska Gold Dredging Company, reports the finding of a group of fossils near the mouth of Bear Creek, a tributary of the Tuluksak River, that have been identified at Columbia University as corresponding to an oil group of fossils found in the United States. A sample of material resembling a hydrocarbon was submitted by Mr. Hirsh. This sample, together with a sample from the tunnel on Gordon Bettles' cinnabar prospect, were identified by Mr. Paul Hopkins. "The dark portions of samples 29 (Hirsh) and 31 (Bettles) contain carbon or hydrocarbons. On heating in a closed tube both

KX 81-10

KX 82-16

Russian Mission
8/1

samples yield yellow oily drops with an odor midway between tar and petroleum. The distinction between bony coal and oil shale is not sharp and these samples might be classed as either of these. Sample 29 was not easily ignited but portions of sample 31 burned freely after ignition with the blow pipe."

CLAY

Goatwells 101

Three samples of clay, were taken from the Lower Kuskokwim Region, in the vicinity of Quinhagak, that is being used by the natives as paint for kyaks and other articles. Mr. Hopkins describes the samples as follows: "Sample 32 was a ball of dried clay containing feldspar partly kaolinized and various other silicates. A small amount of pyrite was detected by panning. Sample 33 was similar to 32 but contained no pyrite. Sample 40 was also a ball of dried clay, red in color. It contained less talc and feldspar than the two previous samples and was much more plastic. The red color is due to oxidized iron compounds. No minerals of value were found in any of these three clay samples."

COPPER

Reported occurrence on Holitna River by W.J. Enibbae, Sleitmute, New Haven

FIRE

Tundra fires raged in the Kuskokwim River Region this summer destroying extensive areas of reindeer feed and threatening the settlements along the river from Sleitmate to Russian Mission. Sleitmate, Napamute, Gordon Bettles, Russian Mission, and Nyac were saved by trenches and backfiring. The main fire was believed to have its origin on Eek or Quinhag Rivers. It followed the main divide going toward Nushagak, and along Stony River to the Kuskokwim. The area along the Kuskokwim River has burned, on the north bank, from Stony River to one mile above Russian Mission. The fire jumped the Kuskokwim River at Sleitmate. At Napamute a native set fire to the tundra which aided the spread of the conflagration. Some of the other fires may have been incendiary supposedly for the excitement caused. The native at Napamute was arrested and sentenced to nine months. Several cabins were destroyed along the river.

The tundra area in the vicinity of the Bear Creek Dredge, Tuluksak River, is said to have been set fire by the tractor. This fire destroyed several bridges and cabins. As a precaution, a screen is now placed on the exhaust of the tractor.

A "smoking mountain," at the head of Stony River, has been reported by the natives of Stony River to Jack Smeaton at Sleitmate. It is thought that the fire may have given the volcano-impression to the natives.

The spread of fire was aided by the long dry season. The greatest loss is the destruction of the reindeer moss. Mr. Fowler, reindeer owner between Flat and Takotna, reports several areas burned in that vicinity making it difficult to find feeding places in winter or a slaughtering point near the two towns. The fire was accompanied by a haze and smoke that remained for some time. The observations of the fire area are casual and gained from the inhabitants in the districts. Mr. Fowler has suggested to the Delegate from Alaska that fire wardens be appointed to guard against a recurrence of fires that threaten the reindeer industry.