

MINING IN THE TOLOVANA, HOT SPRINGS, AND RAMPART DISTRICTS,
1960

During July 20 to 28, 1960, I traveled through the Tolovana, Hot Springs, and Rampart mining districts to visit mining operations. Two one-man mining operations were active in the Tolovana District; four operations employing 15 men were active in the Eureka area; three operations employing 6 men were active in the Rampart District, and one old-timer from Rampart mined by hand part time; there were no active mining operations in the Tofty area.

The completion of the road between Livengood and Eureka in the Fall of 1959 tied the old Tofty-Manley-Eureka road network to the main road system of interior Alaska, making the Manley Hot Springs District accessible by road from Fairbanks. The road from Fairbanks to Eureka is a part of the proposed Fairbanks-Nome road, and surveys have been made westward from Eureka preparatory to extending the road to the Yukon River. The new road undoubtedly has resulted in some increase in economic activity at Manley Hot Springs, chiefly in sales of gasoline, groceries, and lodging. Most freight into the area still comes by river from Nenana or Fairbanks to Manley. In at least one instance during 1960, a party of prospectors spent several days in the area under circumstances such that they probably would not have done so if the area had not been accessible by automobile. The road is a convenience to the mining operators, and it eases the problem of obtaining repair parts on short notice; by making the area more easily accessible to prospectors, it may eventually lead to new mining development.

To reach the Rampart District, I traveled on foot from Eureka Creek over the divide to Minook Creek and down the valley of Minook Creek, following a winter dogsled trail that the Indians have used for

many years. Because of a request by residents of Rampart for the State to build an access road along this route, I took a number of photographs of the terrain and submitted them in August, 1960, in a folder entitled PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN ALONG THE EUREKA-RAMPART TRAIL.

TOLOVANA DISTRICT.

Ben Falls mined during 1960 on Wilbur Creek. At the time of my visit he had temporarily stopped mining because of a shortage of water. Kx49-41
The depth of gravel in his cut varies from 4 to 22 feet; the overlying muck is 50 feet thick. The upper end of the cut is 75 feet downstream from the boundary of a claim owned by Tony Radak of Livengood. The ground above Radak's claim is owned jointly by Ben Falls and Tony Lindstrom. Ben does not plan to start a new cut above the Radak ground unless there is a major change in the economics of gold mining. He uses hydraulic monitors for stripping muck and for piping into the boxes; he uses a bulldozer for pushing to the head of the boxes and for stacking tailing.

The Redstone Mining Co., owned and operated by Carl Heflinger, is mining near Livengood Creek one-half mile upstream from the camp buildings that were built by Livengood Placers, Inc. The present cut is Kx49-18
on the left-limit side of the valley but on the right-limit side of the creek. A D-8 Caterpillar tractor is used for mining and stacking tailing; a sluicelate is used at the head of the boxes. Water for sluicing comes from Livengood Creek, and there appears to be an abundance of water.

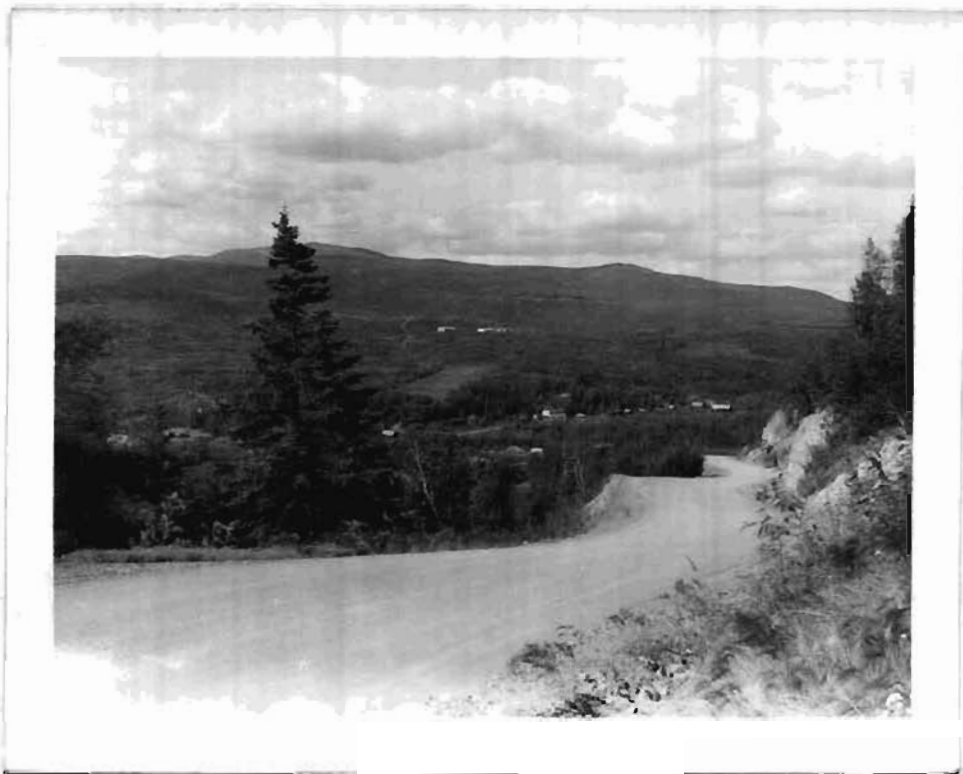


Fig. 1. View up Livengood Creek from road toward Fairbanks. Airstrip is in center, buildings built by Livengood Placers, Inc. just above airstrip.



Fig. 2. View up Livengood Creek from the road toward Eureka.

RAMPART DISTRICT.

Harry Havrilack is mining on the left limit of Ruby Creek 300 to 400 feet upstream from the cut that he was mining in 1957, when he first began mining on the creek. The accompanying photograph shows the total length of ground that he has mined. Apparently there was no mechanical mining done on Ruby Creek before he started mining there, but there was drift mining and open-cut mining by hand. Havrilack is using the same equipment and the same mining method that he was using when last reported on in 1957. At the time of my visit, the pump box was broken, and he had temporarily stopped mining to repair it. He formerly was U. S. Commissioner at Rampart and now is the State Magistrate; he goes to Rampart each Sunday to perform any work that arises in connection with that position.



Fig. 3. Harry Havrilack's mining cut on Ruby Creek.

The T and T Mining Co., owned and operated by Bill Thomas, is mining on the left limit of Hunter Creek a few hundred feet upstream from the site of the 1957 operations. All of the summer through July was spent in stripping with two monitors preparatory to mining a large cut in August and September. The mining and the equipment used is the same as in 1957, however, the tractor being used is a Caterpillar D-6 instead of a D-8 as erroneously stated in the 1957 report. Kx 48-43

In 1959, Bill Thomas mined one cut on Slate Creek on ground owned by Hilliard Avnet, who is no longer in Alaska. He reported that results were not good enough for him to leave Hunter Creek, where he is already established and where the cost of transportation from Rampart is much lower, but he thought that Slate Creek had possibilities. Kx 45-1

The Weisner Trading, owned by Ira Weisner of Rampart, mined until mid-July on Little Minook Creek then stopped mining because of a shortage of water. Two monitors and a D-6 were used for mining, and a dragline was used for stacking tailing. When mining ceased, the sluice box was placed in position for mining the next cut, which has been stripped, and Weisner planned to resume mining if late summer rain made water more plentiful. Kx 48-29 46

The valley of Little Minook Creek is narrow, and the paystreak is 60 to 70 feet wide. A strip of unmined ground 2000 feet long extends from the upper end of Weisner's last cut to the lower end of a mined-out area on the upper part of the creek. This mined-out area extends to Number Nine Pup, a right-limit tributary, which, according to Weisner, is at the upper end of the paystreak. It thus appears that only a 2000-foot-long strip along the valley remains to be mined.



Fig. 4. T and T Mining Co stripping operation on Hunter Creek.

X 48-43



Fig. 5. View down Hunter Creek from upper end of T and T Mining Co ground.

Weisner was preparing to start mining on the right limit of Hoosier Creek about one mile from the mouth. He intended to use a D-5 tractor for mining and stacking tailing. A steel sluice box and a sluice plate had been brought over from Little Minook Creek. Hoosier Creek had more than enough water for mining.

Kx48-35



Fig. 6. View down Little Minook Creek. Stripped cut in the foreground.

Brian MacDivit of Rampart did some hand mining intermittently during the summer on the left limit of Minook Creek a mile or so above the mouth of Ruby Creek, but he was not at his workings during the time that I was in the area.

Kx48-49

EUREKA DISTRICT.

Strandberg and Song have moved the site of their mining operations since last visited in 1958; they are now mining on the bench on the right limit of Eureka Creek one-quarter mile southwest of their camp buildings. Mining methods and equipment used are the same as before. A dragline is used to feed a crawler-mounted washing plant, which was designed and built by the Washington Iron Works. The plant is moved by towing it with a D-8 Caterpillar tractor. The stacker belt, trommel, and pumps on the plant are driven by electric motors, and electricity is furnished by a separate, skid-mounted, diesel-electric generator. The plant was being moved to a new setup at the time of my visit. K+48-24

Pete Johnson mines alone by hydraulicking on the right limit of Eureka Creek approximately one-half mile upstream from the mouth of American Creek. Water for mining comes through a ditch from a right-limit tributary to Eureka Creek one mile upstream from the cut. He mines in "splashes" by allowing the water to back up until the ditch is nearly full, getting one 15-minute splash every two or three hours. One monitor is used for mining and one feeds by-water to the sluice box through a pipe. The sluice box is of wood, and a wooden flume carries away the tailing. K+48-25

Archie Pringle Mined during the first part of the summer on the upper part of Rhode Island Creek. In July he was stripping a new out on the left-limit bench of the creek just below the mouth of Gold Run. A bulldozer and one monitor were being used for stripping. In mining, the bulldozer is used to feed the sluice box and to stack tailing. One man is employed. K+48-37



Fig. 7. Pete Johnson's mining operation on Eureka Creek.

Tony Lanning is mining on the left limit of Thanksgiving Creek recovering side pay left beside old drift mine workings. He uses a bulldozer to mine and to stack tailing and a monitor to wash the gravel into the boxes. He works alone. The total depth of ground being mined is 18 to 20 feet, 4 to 5 feet being gravel. By late July, he had mined one cut and was starting on the second cut of the season.

K-48-27

College, Alaska
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