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TERRITORY OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF MINES
JUNEAU, ALASKA

IR 195-5

Report of Investigations by Howard M. Fowler
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in the McCarthy, Chitina, Chisana, Wasilla, Seward,
and Talkeetna Mining District, Alaska.

August 6 - September 23, 1949

August 6 - To Cordova via P.N.A.

August 7 - To McCarthy via Cordova Air Service.

August 8 - To Kennecott Mill from McCarthy. While it was not practical or desirable to examine the workings of the Kennecott mines, it was felt that a general inspection of the surface plant was in order.

Examination of the railyard showed track and ties in good shape. Bunkhouses and office buildings have shown little signs of wear and inspection of the mill showed few signs of deterioration. In fact, the windows were still intact. All that is lacking is an orebody.

To the Chititu Mining Company located on Rex Creek about one mile above its junction with Chititu Creek. This property is operated by Charlie Cramer, veteran placer operator in the Territory.

During the summer of 1949, six men including Mr. Cramer were employed. Two men have been employed the year round and two men plus the cook and Mr. Cramer arrived about the middle of April. Employment will continue until about September 15th.

During the summer, the principal emphasis was placed on dead work for the 1950 season but some drifting on bedrock under heavy overburden was done in order to de-limit the paystreak. The paystreak is about 33 feet wide. Open cuts and test holes about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles above the mouth of Rex Creek has failed to locate the paystreak and Cramer believes that it has been scoured out by glaciation. Further prospect work will be necessary.

During normal operation, the Chititu Mining Company runs 3 nozzles, with one stacking tailings. About 16 men are usually employed. The gold averages about \$31.50 per ounce.

While U.S.G.S. Bulletin 894, page 128, states that native copper nuggets do not occur in the placer gravels of Rex Creek, this is not strictly true as Mr. Cramer has found a considerable

McCarthy 87

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McCarthy 87
quantity of copper in his placer operations. It is also of interest that heavy molybdenite float has been found about 4,000 feet above the mouth of Rex Creek. The source has not been located but a large number of acidic dikes cut through the area and it is probable that the molybdenite source will be in close association with these dikes. Close inspection indicated that the molybdenite had not travelled a great distance. Some native silver is also found in the creek.

Mr. Cramer stated that the Department of Mines would be notified if any lode sources of the above minerals were located in the area.

August 9 - To Dan Creek, McCarthy District.

XX-87-2
This property was not in operation at the time of the visit. Mr. Walter Holmes, Mrs. Holmes, and 2 men were at the property. Mr. Holmes stated that he had had an option on the Dan Creek property but because of rising costs of operation had let it revert to Mr. Jack O'Neill of Anchorage. Mr. Holmes, at the time of the visit, was engaged in doing a small amount of prospect drift work and in maintenance work. Mr. Holmes stated that there was small chance that Mr. O'Neill would try to place the property in operation until present high prices have dropped.

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The deposits here have been formed by a re-concentration of heavy bench gravels which were originally deposited behind an ice dam blocking off Dan Creek and its tributaries. In the re-concentrated material is found considerable native copper nuggets, some silver nuggets, and a few half silver - half copper nuggets. One copper nugget has been found that is locally estimated to weigh between 4½ to 5 tons.

August 10 - To Chisana from May Creek Field via Cordova Air Service.

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Because Mr. Fred Wann and Mr. Robert Evers of Fairbanks and Juneau had formed a prospect company called the Pewabik Mining Company during the past winter and promoted stock sales in the city of Juneau for an amount variously reported from \$35,000 to \$55,000 in order to prospect in the White River area some 45 miles south of Chisana, Mr. B. D. Stewart, Commissioner of Mines, suggested that a trip be made to investigate the activities of the company. This was deemed advisable because of the fantastic claims the promoters were making in order to effect their stock sales.

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The promoters planned to prospect various areas along the White River, but assured their investors that they already had access to rich copper lodes near the Russell Glacier at the head of the White River. They also knew of likely gold placers, rich copper placers, coal seams, platinum and silver deposits, and in fact, everything necessary for the development and construction of a fine modern city. In view of this, Mr. Stewart felt an examination of the company activities was in order.

August 11 - A saddle horse and pack horse were rented at Chisana for the approximately 45 mile trip to the White River area in which the Wann-Byers party were supposed to be located.

August 12 - The Wann-Byers prospect party was found camped at the mouth of Solo Creek on the White River and about 10 miles below the Russell Glacier. At the time of the visit, Fred Wann was in camp alone. Three other members of the party were returning from Lime Creek near the Russell Glacier where they had been hunting and prospecting. The rest of the party were absent attempting to obtain repair parts for the weasel used by the company.

Although the prospect party had left Juneau for the area in May and had been in the vicinity of Solo Creek for nearly two months, nothing of interest had been found by them. This, in spite of the fact that they had assured the investors that they knew of large mineral deposits in that area. It became apparent that Mr. Wann was the only member of the group with a knowledge of minerals and that since he had a bad heart, was not able to leave camp. It also appeared that the party members were more interested in hunting and fishing than in prospecting.

While at the camp the crew with the weasel returned and plans were made for a move to Kletsan Creek, a tributary of the White River near the Canadian boundary. This creek has been reported in U.S.G.S. 417 to contain placer native copper.

August 13 - To Lime Creek to check possible mineral occurrences in the Middle Fork and Lime Creek areas. This area is best covered in U.S.G.S. Bulletins 417 and 630. Occurrences of lode copper referred to in the Bulletins could not be reached because high river water could not be forded. Some ground had been surveyed for patent in this area about 1911 but no ore has ever been produced.

August 14 - To North Fork Island on the White River with part of the Wann-Byers crew and return to Solo Creek. No mineralization was noted although each of the streams crossed was checked.

August 15 - To Wiley Creek at the south side of the Russell Glacier face. A small amount of copper mineralization was noted by S. R. Capps in U.S.G.S. Bulletin 630 at a point about 2 miles above the mouth of the creek. However, some 40 years has served to obliterate any previous work and nothing was found.

August 16 - Return to Chisana.

August 17 -

On report of a Chisana native of a copper deposit on Eucra Mountain near the Chisana Glacier, a short trip was made in company with the native to the supposed site of the deposit. However, the native was unable to locate anything, and it developed that he had

only heard about the deposit and had never actually seen it.

August 18 - 19 - At Chisana.

At the time of the Chisana trip, the few placer properties that had not closed because of the high cost of operation had closed temporarily because of lack of water. Mr. Joe Davis was attempting to work a shovel-in operation on Little Eldorado Creek. He expected about three months of water and was working alone.

The Bonanza Mining Company was closed down temporarily but employed 2 men on a hydraulic operation on Bonanza Creek. The Nutzotin Mining Company, operated by Mr. and Mrs. William James for a group of Anchorage stockholders, was engaged in stripping operations on Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks. Three men were employed. The James were considering filing a lawsuit against two of their employees because of alleged sabotage against a pumping unit at the property. The James did not expect to get in over three months of operation.

August 20 - To Chitina via Cordova Air Service.

August 21 - Chitina to Valdez.

No mining activity is being conducted at present in the Valdez area.

August 22 - Valdez to Cordova.

August 23 - Cordova to Anchorage via P.N.A.

August 24 - 26 - At Anchorage on official business.

August 27 - To Fern Mine in the Willow Creek District.

August 28 -

A Safety Examination was conducted at this property. The management appeared to be safety conscious and willing to conform to safety practices in the operation of the mine. A number of recommendations for improvement were made and a report sent to Mr. B. D. Stewart, Commissioner of Mines, for office file.

The request by Mr. Al Dodson of the Fern Mine for permission to store his powder supply underground was tentatively granted after examination disclosed that no completely suitable location was available on the surface. A storage cross-cut was selected and permission was granted subject to the final approval of Mr. B. D. Stewart, Commissioner of Mines.

Mr. Stewart advised the Fern Mining Company that permission would be approved by him only under case of extreme necessity and

that the Fern Mine would have to show complete justification. This, the Fern Mine did not do and so storage was made under the best conditions possible on the surface.

At the time of the visit, 6 men were employed. Five were underground and one was on the surface. The company planned to operate through the winter.

August 29 -

A visit was made to the Glacier Claims of Jake Lane on upper Archangel Creek. This property was examined, a map drawn, a report written, and the data placed on file at the Department of Mines Office in Juneau, Alaska. KA
85-36

August 30 -

The Snowbird Mining Company was visited for the purpose of conducting a safety examination of the property. Mr. Phil Holdsworth is in active charge at the mine but Mr. Cappy Faroe and Mr. Chris Paulson of Anchorage are the principal backer. KA
85-80

Anchorage 85
During 1949, the efforts of the company were directed primarily towards the construction of a powerhouse and mine mill. Little work was done underground. Actually, it appears evident that the underground work has not been carried far enough along to prove the necessity for a mill. About 20 men are employed at the property.

The safety examination conducted disclosed several unsafe conditions present, with particular emphasis on the location and conditions of powder storage. A request was made by Mr. Phil Holdsworth for permission to store the powder underground and the request was relayed to Mr. B. D. Stewart, Commissioner of Mines.

The Snowbird management was informed that they would be notified by Mr. Stewart regarding their request and that another examination would be given the property after the company had had a sufficient length of time to effect corrections. The return was set for about mid-October.

August 31 -

The Webfoot Prospect on Archangel Creek was visited for the purpose of lending any assistance possible to the management at the property. A brunton survey was conducted on the property, a map drawn, and a report written. This information is on file with the Territorial Department of Mines at Juneau, Alaska. KA
85-12+13+14

September 1 -

At Webfoot Prospect - To the Independence Mine.

September 2 -

The Independence Mine is under the active management of Mr. William Stoll and Mr. Paul Howath. The mine is operating under a leasing system patterned after leasing systems in use in the southwest. The management has requested that the Lease Agreement not be made public but gave the Department of Mines a copy of the form used for office files.

KX
85-1+2
+107

At the time of the visit, 75 men were employed at the property. Safety conditions were not good but inasmuch as the property had only recently re-opened after an extended closure, the examination was conducted only in a general way. A further examination was planned for about October 15th. A copy of the recommendations made on this inspection are on file at the Territorial Department of Mines Office in Juneau, Alaska.

September 3 - Return to Anchorage.

September 4 - 6 - At Anchorage on official business.

September 7 - To Seward.

A visit was made to Mr. Elynn Swetmann, president of the local bank. Mr. Swetmann is owner of the New Hope-Hirshy Mines on Palmer Creek near Hope, Alaska. Mr. Swetmann requested an examination of the Hirshey Mine No. 2 level. The Hirshey Vein had been lost on that level and considerable drifting had failed to pick it up. Inasmuch as the ore in this vein had run several ounces of gold per ton, Mr. Swetmann was keenly interested in relocating it.

September 8 - To Hirshey Mine from Hope, Alaska.

September 9 - 10 - At the Hirshey Mine.

Examination of the lower tunnel (No. 3 level) of the Hirshey Mine disclosed unsafe workings for examination. The upper tunnel (No. 1 level) was caved near the portal. Therefore, the search for structural controls effecting the Hirshey Vein were necessarily confined to the Number 2 level. A base map prepared previously by Mr. Howard Wilcox was used for the work. It was, however, necessary to revise somewhat and to complete Mr. Wilcox's map. Several samples were cut on various stringers with negative results. Close examination revealed that the Hirshey Vein had pinched and rolled abruptly into the hanging wall at a point about 500 feet in from the portal. This, apparently, was not discovered by the crew engaged in the prospect work because drifting continued on past the roll and into the foot-wall for a total of about 350 feet.

KX
95-47

The structures here were mapped and copies given to Mr. Swetmann together with the recommendation to drift on the rolled vein.

September 11 -

A visit was made to the Gold Mint Prospect on Palmer Creek.

KX
95-38

This property is owned by Ivor Nearhouse of Hope, Alaska. This property has previously been surveyed by Mr. Jack Roehm, Territorial Mining Engineer. However, a short traverse was run to determine the distance from the bottom of the shaft to the open hillside. It became apparent later that there was an error in the traverse and for that reason the distance could not be computed. The error was due probably to the surface portion of the traverse being run in the late evening during a heavy storm with a consequent improper reading of an angle.

September 12 - To the Falls Creek Mining Company in the Moose Pass District near Kenai Lake.

September 13 - 14 - At Falls Creek Mining Co.

KA-14
95

This property is under the management of Mr. S. A. Liening, of Seward. The camp opened on the 20th of June and plans are to keep it open until at least the 15th of October. It is hoped to run the mill about 35 days. Eight men were employed for 2.5 months. Six men will be employed until the property closes for the winter. Three men are working underground. The balance are on the surface. The mine operates for 14 days of each 15. Bob Clark is the mine foreman and Harold Haines the mill superintendent.

A safety examination of the property was conducted and the company advised to:

1. Maintain an adequate supply of First Aid Gear.
2. Purchase a basket-type stretcher.
3. Bar down and stull-up main tunnel.
4. Remove powder supply from immediate camp area in conformity with American Table of Distances.
5. Do not keep cap supply in tool box with tools.
6. Keep fuse in dry place instead of present place exposed to tain.
7. Repair brakes on truck.

The attitude of the management towards safety appeared to be good but no later check was made to certify if connections were made.

A return was made on the evening of the 14th to Anchorage.

September 15 - 16 - At Anchorage on official business.

September 17 - To Talkeetna via Alaska Railroad.

September 18 - Arrangements were made with Mr. George Weatherall for transportation into the Cache Creek District in the Peters Hills from Talkeetna.

The Nugget Mining Company was operating with three men on Cache Creek near the mouth of Thunder Creek. The crew was reported to have started operations about the middle of May and hoped to continue until the middle of October.

The Thunder Creek Mines, Inc., employed 3 men on Thunder Creek. Some hydraulicing was done but most of the work was directed towards prospecting for new ground. Mr. Fred D. Hougham was in charge.

The Sunset Mining Co. was active on Lower Cache Creek about 4 miles below the mouth of Windy. The property, a bulldozer-hydraulic operation, employed 4 men.

A. J. Taraski was reported working a hydraulic operation alone on Cache Creek, opposite Lucky Gulch. Mr. Taraski was leasing part of the Cache Creek Mining Company property. The length of his operating season was unknown.

September 19 - At Mr. George Weatherall's hydraulic operation on Nugget Creek. Mr. Weatherall is operating only a short season due to lack of water and high operating costs. Mr. Weatherall and his son are the only employees and they do not expect over a two month season during 1949.

September 20 - To Mr. C. W. (Shorty) Bradley's hydraulic property on Upper Cache Creek. Three men were employed part-time but because of low water and need for additional prospecting, little work was done during the season.

A stop was made at the Bird Creek Mine of Mike A. Trepki and Anton Meise. This is a hydraulic operation with two men employed. A point of interest at this property is the unusually large amount of scheelite found in the boxes at clean-up. This condition is not true in other creeks of the area according to local operators. It is therefore recommended that a night time survey of the creek be made with a mineralite in the hope that the bedrock source of the scheelite be located.

A trip was made to Mr. Paul Gagnon's bulldozer-hydraulic property on Willow and Cottonwood Creeks. A crew of five were employed with an operating season from May until October.

September 21 - At Paul Gagnon's.

This property has an interesting history as the previous owners, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, were murdered here together with two prospectors in a nearby cabin. It has been reliably reported by Mr. Jenkins' brother that considerable high-grade quartz was brought in by the murdered brother from time to time, but the murdered man would never reveal its source. The placer ground here is unusually rich and according to Mr. Gagnon, the present owner, the last cut on Cottonwood Creek revealed numerous pieces of sharp jagged quartz on

which were fastened gold nuggets sometimes as large in size as a ten cent piece. Some of these pieces of gold examined by the writer were of a bright jagged nature and indicated that they had not travelled far. There was little or no evidence of rounding or water wear on either the gold or quartz. The Gagnons stated that numerous other pieces of gold quartz had been found in cuts in an adjacent creek. Mr. Gagnon stated that he had no intention of taking out another cut because the ground here was too well filled with large boulders to be readily handled. It is believed probable by the writer that the gold in Willow and Cottonwood Creeks was derived from a vein source that is nearby. It may be that Mr. Jenkins had discovered this source as it was stated by Mr. Jenkins' brother that Mr. Jenkins was never gone from the cabin more than a day or two on his trips after the quartz highgrade. Extensive prospecting for a lode source appears justified. At any rate, close observation of bedrock and of the characteristics of the gold found should be done.

George Pittoff and Robert Dahl were reported to be sniping on Upper Nugget Creek. Helvor Erickson was sniping on Cache Creek between the Nugget and Bradley ground. Matt Hamberg and Joe Giliska were hydraulicing on Paso Creek. L. L. Pennington and Jack Tyler were reported to be moving 2 cats and a dragline into Daisy Creek, a tributary of Tyone River.

A return to Talkeetna from Gagnon's was made on the afternoon of September 21.

September 22 - The Collinsville Mine at Mills Creek and Lower Twin Creek was reported to be operating its dragline-washing plant with a crew of 10 men. Jim and Albert Frey were hydraulicing on Valdez Creek for a full season. Henry Ernest and Ollie Nicklie were reported in Talkeetna to be working the Boomer Creek Group on Valdez Creek. Loren Campbell was sniping on the Carlson property on Valdez Creek. Charles M. Buroker was reported to be sniping on the Etna and Flora claims on Valdez Creek.

A trip was made on September 22 from Talkeetna to the U.S.B.M. diamond drilling project at Windy on the Alaska Railroad. Five men were employed under Mr. Robert L. Thorne, engineer for the Bureau of Mines. The crew were engaged in diamond drilling a limestone deposit for a contemplated cement plant along the railroad belt. On last report, the deposit did not prove to be satisfactory.

September 23 - To Fairbanks.

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