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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR J. A. KRUG, SECRETARY

BUREAU OF MINES R. R. SAYERS, DIRECTOR

REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS

EUREKA COUNTY, NEVADA



BY

REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR - BUREAU OF MINES

EXPLORATION OF THE MOUNT HOPE MINE, EUREKA COUNTY, NEVADA 1

By E. J. I Matson 2/

SUMMARY

The Bureau of Mines has been investigating deposits of critical and essential minerals in the United States since 1939. Projects were set up on only the most promising properties.

A preliminary examination of the Mount Hope mine was made in January 1943 by the Bureau's engineers, who recommended exploration by diamond drilling.

The mine is in the unsurveyed portion of T. 22 N., R. 1 E., Mount Diablo base and meridian, south-central Eureka County, Nevada, 25 miles by road north of the village of Eureka. A partly graded and graveled secondary road connects the mine and Eureka on U. S. Highway 50.

Extensive sampling was done by the Bureau in February 1943. Core drilling from the surface was started on March 15, 1944, and completed on April 2, 1945. The 18 holes drilled totaled 7,215 feet. The mining company also did extensive underground core drilling from April 21, 1944, to January 4, 1945. This report gives the results of core drilling supervised by the Bureau of Mines.

The drilling program was designed to explore for extensions of the mineralization exposed in the mine workings. As a result of drilling, additional ore was found, and it is believed that this project has fulfilled the purpose for which it was planned.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In its program of exploration of mineral deposits, the Bureau of Mines has as its primary objective the more effective utilization of our mineral resources to the end that they make the greatest possible contribution to national security and economy. It is the policy of the Bureau to publish the facts developed by each exploratory project as soon as practicable after its conclusion. The Mining Branch, Lowell B. Moon, chief, conducts preliminary

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^{2/} Mining engineer, Boulder City Division, Mining Branch, Bureau of Mines.

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examinations, performs the actual exploratory work, and prepares the final report. The Metallurgical Branch, R. G. Knickerbocker, chief, analyzes samples of ore and performs beneficiation tests. Both these branches are under the supervision of Dr. R. S. Dean, assistant director.

With respect to this report, special acknowledgment is due to Charles W. Merriam of the United States Geological Survey for his interpretation of the Mount Hope mine geology and his cooperation throughout the project; Col. Leverett Davis, former lessee of the property; K. K. Hood, manager of the Mount Hope Unit, Callahan Zinc-Lead Co., Inc.; C. P. Knaebel, assistant manager, and M. P. Nackowski, geologist, of that company, for their help, and to the Sullivan Machinery Co. for its assistance.

Acknowledgment is also made to Glenn L. Allen and G. L. Thompson, who examined the property and recommended the work; Paul T. Allsman, chief, Salt Lake City Division, and A. C. Johnson, chief, Reno Division, Mining Branch; and Lowell B. Moon, chief, Mining Branch, for their aid and direction.

OWNERSHIP

The property is owned by the Universal Exploration Co., a subsidiary of U. S. Steel Corporation. It is under option by the Callahan Zinc-Lead Co., Inc., Empire State Building, New York, N. Y., and consists of 13 lode mining claims and one millsite, a total of 256 acres. The claims are designated Good Hope and Good Hope Millsite in Surveys 37A and B; Parallel Extension, Magnolia, Dixon No. 1, Dixon No. 2, Lorraine, Lorraine No. 1, Lorraine No. 2, Silver Butte, Silver Butte No. 1, Silver Butte No. 2, and San Juan Chief, all in Survey 4704.

HISTORY

The occurrence of lead-zinc ore in the Mount Hope district was first discovered in 1970 by Basque sheepherders, who at times also operated small charcoal furnaces. The charcoal was used in the lead smelters in Eureka. Scant attention was paid to the ore croppings because of their low silver content.

In 1890, Thomas Wren drove the present Mount Hope No. 2 adit in an unsuccessful search for rich lead-silver-gold ore. Wren also sank what is now called the Whim shaft and dug some shallow holes at the surface. Nothing further was ventured until 1926, when the U. S. Smelting, Refining & Mining Co. drove the present No. 1 adit. This was also done in an unrewarded hunt for lead-silver-gold ore.

The major development at the Lorraine section of the property was done about 1886 by a Mr. Batchelder, a resident of Nevada.

In 1928 the Mount Hope properties were optioned by Universal Exploration Co. and exploration work, started in the fall, was continued until January 1930. Approximately 1,000 feet of drifting, 3,500 feet of diamond drilling, and 1,005 feet of churn drilling were done. In October 1930 all the claims were deeded to the Universal Exploration Co. Subsequently the property was

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conveyed to the Columbia Steel Co. In July 1943 a lease agreement was given by Columbia Steel Co. to Leverett Davis and further exploratory work was commenced by him. Subsequently, Leverett Davis transferred the lease agreement to the Callhan Zinc-Lead Co., Inc., the present operator, which now has a controlling interest in the lease. In April 1944 the Columbia Steel Co. conveyed the property to the Universal Exploration Co., the present owner.

Between July 17, 1943, and October 31, 1944, 2,757 dry tons of ore, averaging 8.23 percent zinc and 1.76 percent lead, were shipped to Combined Metals Reduction Co. at Bauer, Utah.

Callahan Zinc-Lead Co., Inc., Empire State Building, New York, N. Y., conducted an extensive drilling and development program and constructed a power plant and concentrating mill on the property to treat about 200 tons of ore per day. Productive operations commenced July 1945, and the first cadmiumbearing zinc concentrates were shipped ton July 9, 1945.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

The property is on the southeast side of Mount Hope, which rises to an altitude of about 8,000 feet. The portal of the main adit, from which the present mining operations are being conducted, is 6,745 feet in altitude, and the camp site is 50 to 100 feet lower. The relief of the area is moderate at the camp site and at the portal of the mine adit but rises steeply and is very rugged towards the crest of Mount Hope, as shown in accompanying illustrations.

Sparse to moderate vegetation occurs in the area; no timber suitable for mine use can be cut. Potable water for mine and camp comes from an old drill hole near the face of No. 2 adit; the supply is limited. The winze in No. 1 adit encountered some water (40 g.p.m.), but it is not suitable for domestic use. The company has churn-drilled two holes about 2 miles south of the mine, and these will furnish abundant water for all domestic and operation purposes.

The climate varies from hot, dry summers to moderately cold winters. Heavy snows may occur often during the winter months, necessitating the use of snow-removal equipment to open the roads.

Railroad points are Palisade, Ely, Fallon, and Reno at distances of 60, 102, 208, and 271 miles, respectively. Eureka, postal center from which telephone connection is available, is 25 miles south of the property. Eureka is a small village on U. S. Highway 50 with a population of about 500 and is connected to the mine by a partly graveled road.

Ore is shipped via truck over State Highway 20 to Palisade, a station on the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific Railroads. The road has recently been graveled and made serviceable under the mine-access road program.

LABOR AND LIVING CONDITIONS

The company has no permanent living quarters for the staff or employees. However, 40 trailer cabins for living purposes have been obtained temporarily from the Federal Public Housing Authority. In addition, F.P.H.A. has supplied two utility cabins and two lavatory cabins.

Alternating 60-cycle, 110-volt electric current is supplied by the company for lighting. The company also maintains a shower-equipped change house for the employees at the mine and boarding house for all unmarried employees.

. Two school-type busses, each capable of hauling about 25 men, also are available for transporting men to and from Eureka.

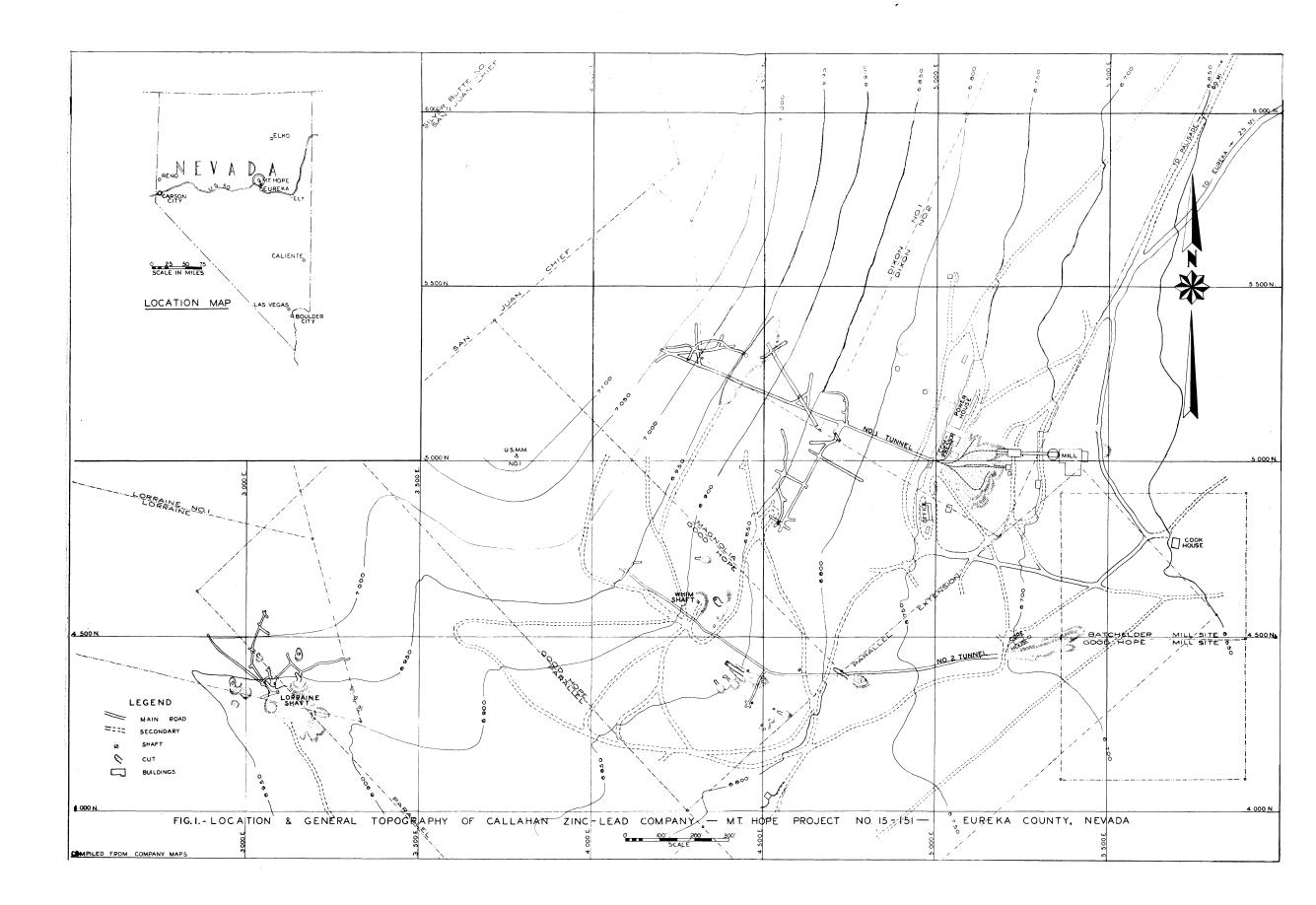
At the time of writing, miners were paid a base rate of \$7.65 per 8-hour day, and muckers got \$7.15, base pay, all with time and one-half for work over 40 hours. Men were obtained from Eureka and from the U. S. Employment Service at Ely, Nev.

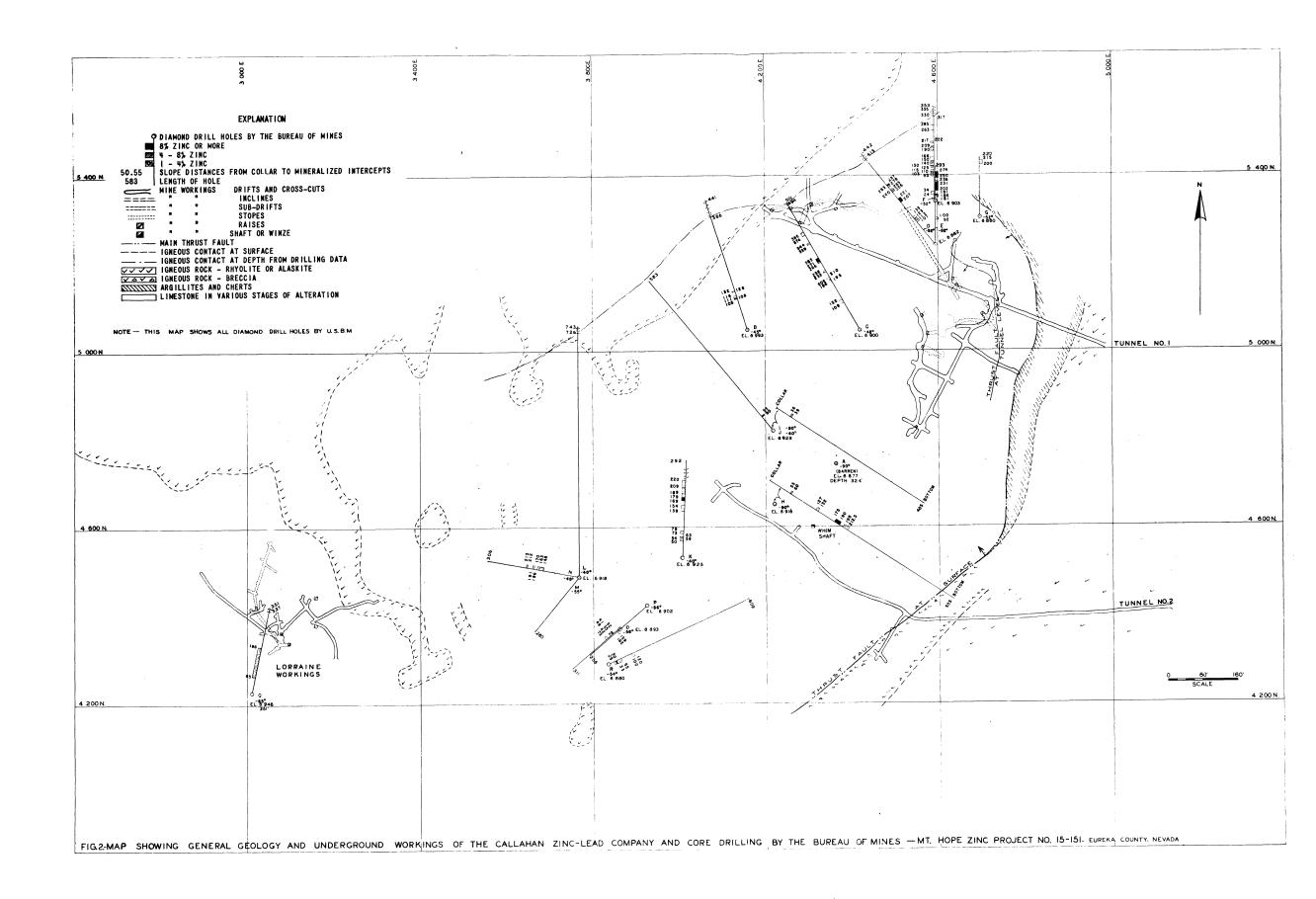
MINE WORKINGS AND PLANT

The property consists of four main areas of development, designated herein as (1) No. 1 adit, (2) No. 2 adit, (3) Whim shaft area, and (4) Lorraine area.

- 1. No. 1 adit area consists of an adit about 800 feet long, with numerous drifts, crosscuts, raises, and winzes totaling about 4,055 linear feet. Present mining operations and development in this area are being conducted where about 15,000 cubic feet of stoping had been done up to July 1945.
- 2. No. 2 adit area comprises one adit 1,350 feet long, with about 385 feet of subdrifts, crosscuts, raises, and one 10-foot winze a total of about 1,745 linear feet. No. 2 adit has been bulkheaded at the portal and is used as a reservoir for water supply. The water comes from an old diamond drill hole near the face of the drift and supplies the bare necessities for domestic and mine use.
- 3. Whim shaft area is developed by a 90-foot shaft and a small stoped area. On the west face of the stope there is a 3-foot showing of ore that assayed 16.2 percent zinc and 15.4 percent lead. The shaft and workings, however, are inaccessible, and as continuity of mineralization was not established, no further work has been done in this area.
- 4. Lorraine workings comprise two vertical shafts 90 and 135 feet, respectively, and five levels the main adit (0-foot level), 30-foot, 50-foot, 85-foot, and 130-foot levels.

The main adit (0-foot level) extends northwesterly about 240 feet with an irregular drift to the northeast 240 feet in length. The northeasterly drift is connected with the surface at a point about 140 feet east of the main portal. Numerous small subdrifts and crosscuts comprise the development of this level and total 834 linear feet.





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The two vertical shafts are 90 and 135 feet deep and are only 20 feet apart. The deepest shaft connects with the 30, 50, 85, and 130-foot levels, and the 90-foot shaft reaches all but the 130-foot level. The connecting passageways are now caved and inaccessible. The 30-foot level joins both shafts and has one drift 25 feet long, on about 15 feet long, and two small subdrifts, a total of 81 linear feet.

The 50-foot level also connects the two shafts and has a short crosscut along midway between aggregating 36 linear feet.

The 85-foot level is an "L"-shaped drift that connects the two shafts and has a total length of 98 linear feet.

The 130-foot or deepest level has one long drift extending northerly for a distance of 265 feet from the main shaft. Numerous short subdrifts 5 to 33 feet long have been driven at approximately right angles from the main drift. A small stope or raise (inaccessible) estimated to be 40 feet long extends from the lower level. Total drifting and raising is about 443 feet on this level.

Total drifting, sinking, and raising at the Lorraine workings amounts to 1,769 feet.

The mine has enough equipment for ordinary mining operations of approximately 200 ton per day.

GEOLOGY 3

Ore at the Mount Hope mine occurs as replacement deposits in altered limestone stone near the alaskite stock that forms the dome. These altered limestone zones occur within roof pendants wholly or partly engulfed by the intrusive magma and are not large. Consequently, the areas favorable for further exploration are limited. Ore distribution is erratic and is controlled by the contact with the intrusive, by the low-angle Mount Hope thrust fault, by northeasterly trending high-angle fault fissures, and by the bedding planes.

Principal ore mineral is marmatite, iron-rich zinc sulfide, occurring as seams, lenses, and disseminated specks in the altered limestone. Cadmium in small quantities is associated with the zinc. Galena also occurs in the Mount Hope ores, but not in as large quantities as the marmatite, and lead is only a minor metal. Other accessory minerals are pyrrhotite, chalcopyrite, garnet, calcite, limonite, and altered limestone. Ore is thought to have been formed by ascending solutions following the high-angle fissure and thrust-fault zone.

Sedimentary rocks at the Mount Hope mine are limestones, cherts, and argillites correlated as Pennsylvanian and Ordivician. These have been intruded by the Mount Hope stock, a porphyritic alaskite, and the economic metallic minerals were believed to have been deposited during the late stages of the intrusion.

^{3/} From oral communications and preliminary notes by C. W. Merriam, geologist, Federal Geological Survey.

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Principal structural features are a low-angle thrust fault of irregular trace with a northerly over-all strike, dipping west from 10 to 30 degrees, and a highly asymmetrical fold occurring in the Pennsylvania sediments on the hanging-wall side of the thrust. A large number of fault fissures are present, some having a northeasterly strike and others somewhat parrallel to the thrust fault.

Bedding in the anticlinal fold has a northwesterly strike; in the south-west area it dips steeply to the southwest, whereas towards the northeast it flattens out appreciably and is almost flat. In the footwall of the main thrust chert and argillite beds are sheared and dislocated but dip westward at 40 to 60 degrees.

MINING METHODS

At present the only mining system developed has been the open-stope method. The ground in both No. 1 and No. 2 adits has shown no signs of sloughing or caving except at the juncture of the thrust fault with No. 1 adit, where a small amount of timbering was necessary. Stoped areas have no timber and show no signs of sloughing and as the unsupported ground stands well, the flat ore zones are worked cheaply by selective mining by the room-and-pillar method. Most pillars are low-grade or barren areas, and mucking is done with scrapers.

The smaller vertical zones also are mined by the open-stope method, using pillars or occasional stulls where necessary.

ORE DRESSING

The concentrator at the property was still under construction at the time project work was completed by the Bureau. Most of the equipment to be installed has been transferred from the Duquesne mill of the Callahan Zinc-Lead Co., Inc., near Nogales, Ariz., and the Western-Knapp Engineering Corp. was awarded the contract for the construction.

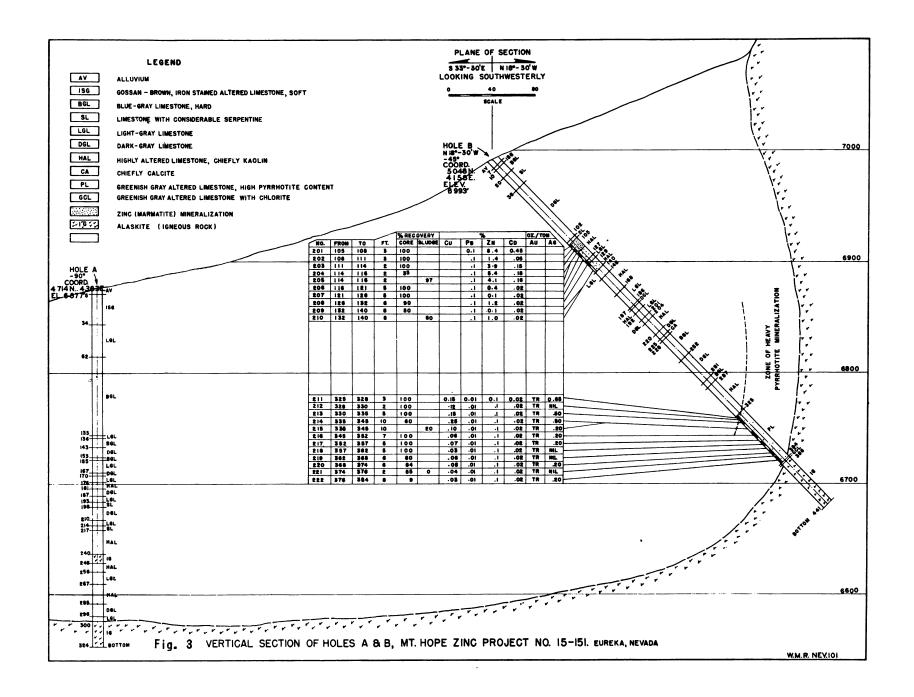
Preliminary tests were made by the ore-dressing laboratory of the Bureau of Mines at Salt Lake City on a composite of eight samples from No. 1 adit, which analyzed as follows:

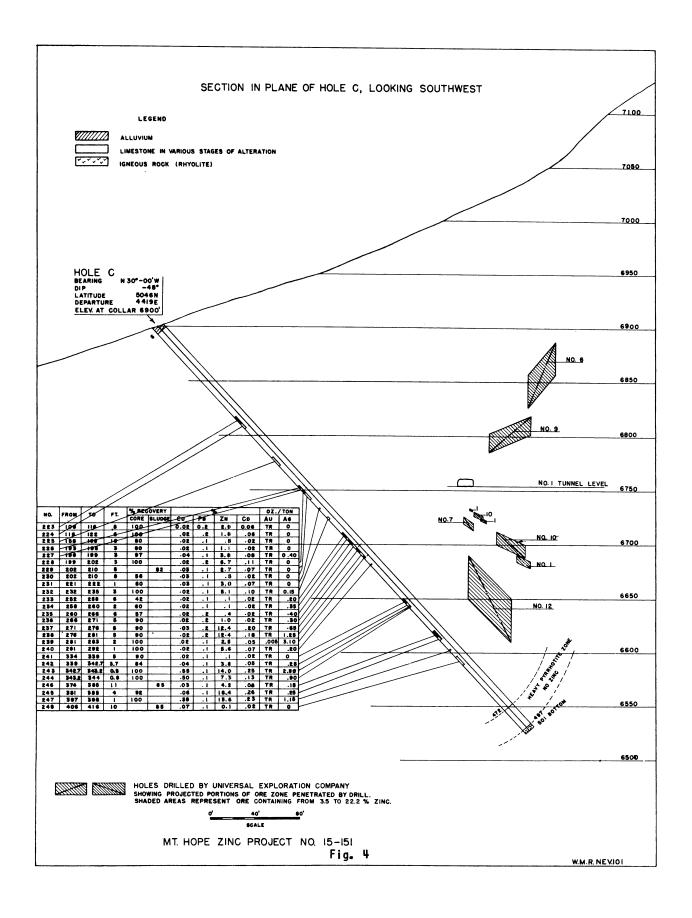
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•	Zn 12.75	$\frac{0x.Zn.}{0.7}$	<u>Cd</u> 0.6	<u>Cu</u> 0.1	Pb •05	Fe 10.6	<u>.s</u> - 13 . 2	Insol. 50.4	Ca0 12.8	Mg0 3.6	Al ₂ 0 ₃	$\frac{Au}{Tr}$	$\frac{Ag}{0.96}$

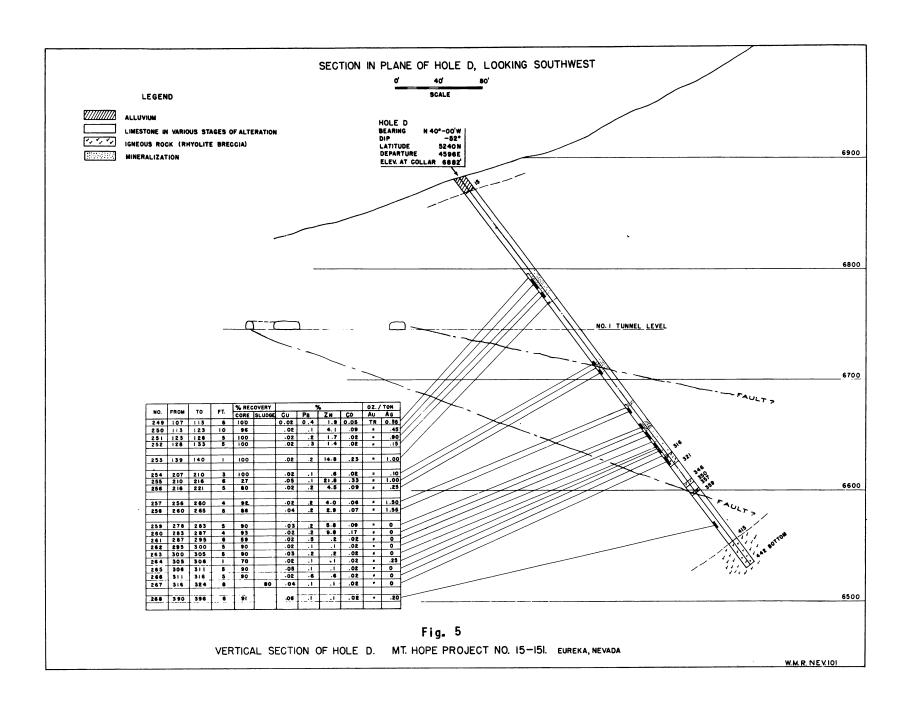
Briefly, these tests indicated'

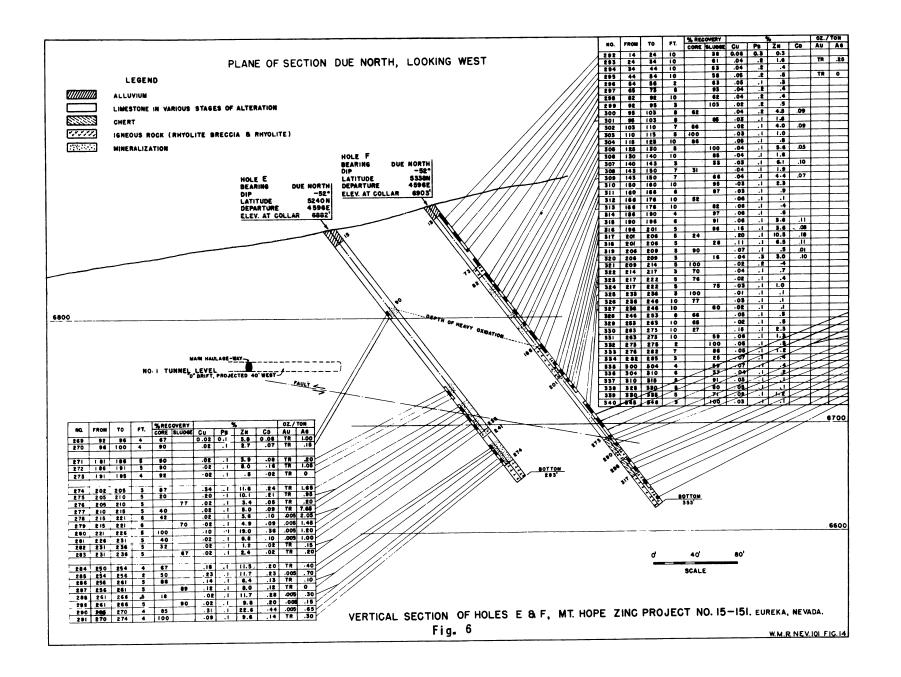
By selective flotation of ore ground to minus 100-mesh, over 90 percent of the zinc and cadmium was recovered in a concentrate assaying 42.2 percent zinc, 16.1 percent Fe, 1.8 percent Cd, and 4.8 percent insol. Owing to the inclusion of fine foreign sulfides in the zinc concentrate, a finer grind was next employed. After minus 200-mesh grinding, 74.1 percent of the zinc was recovered in a product

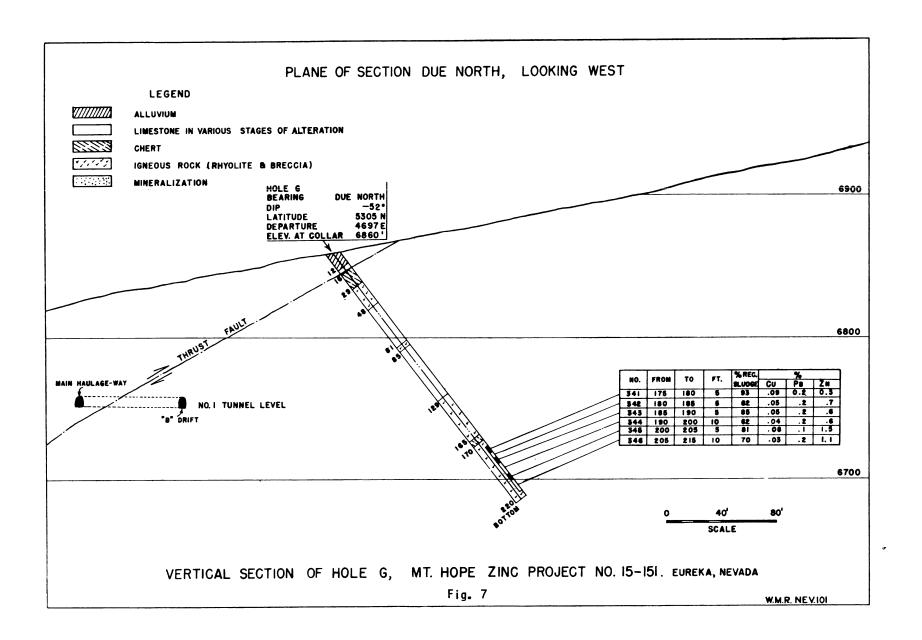
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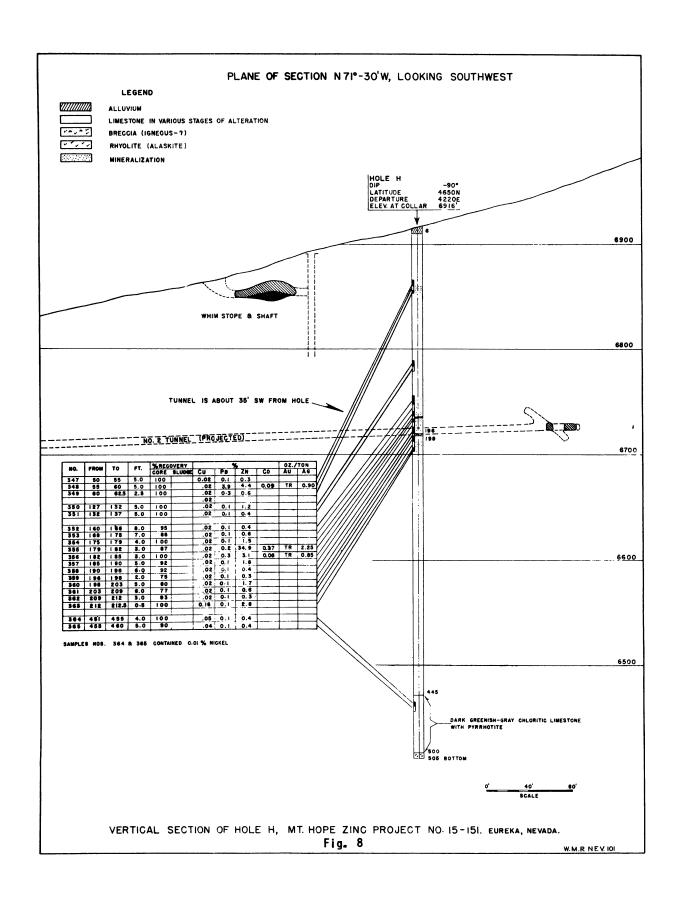


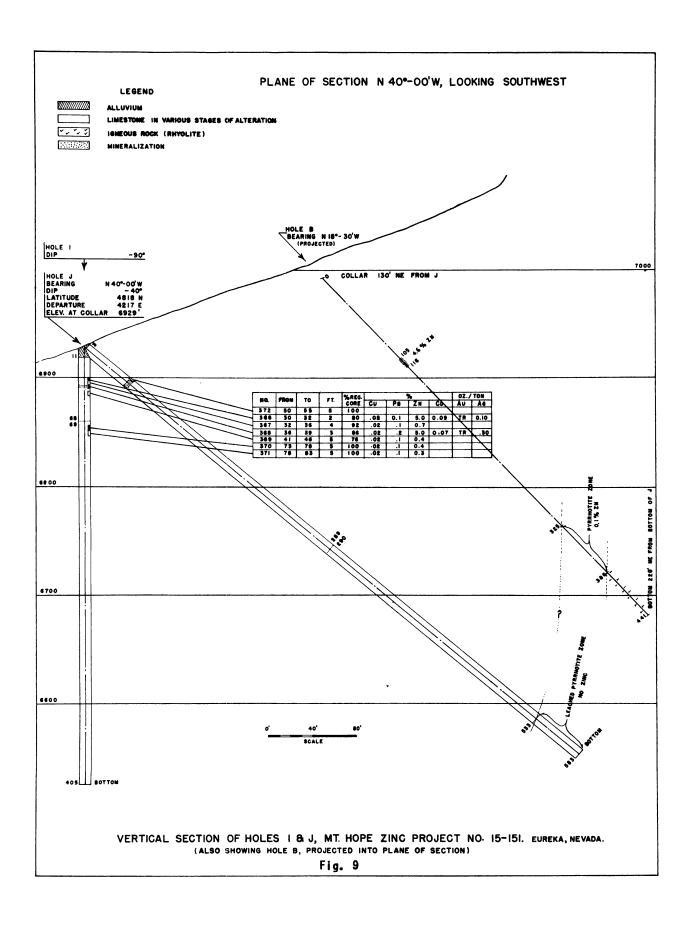


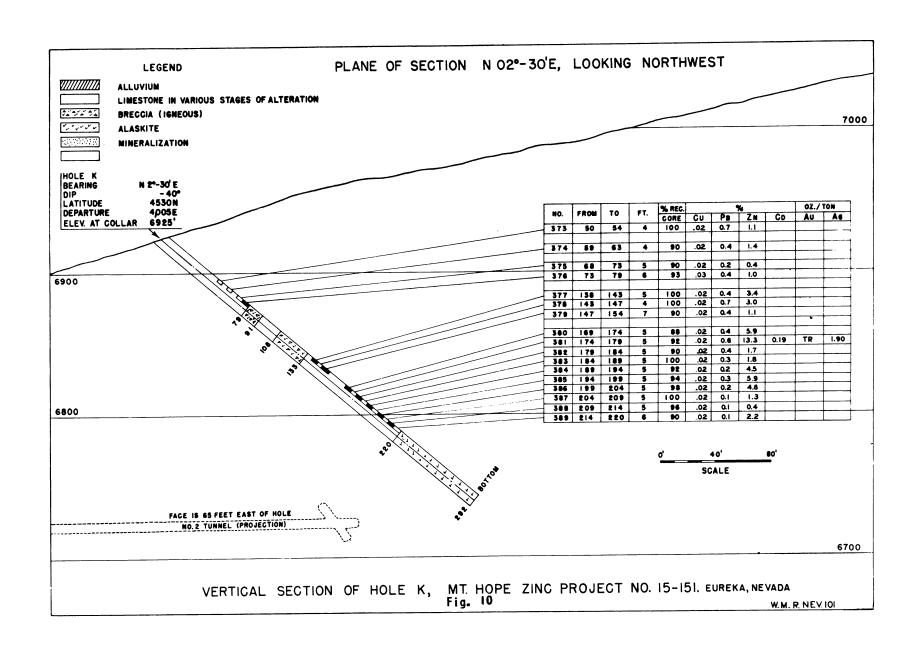


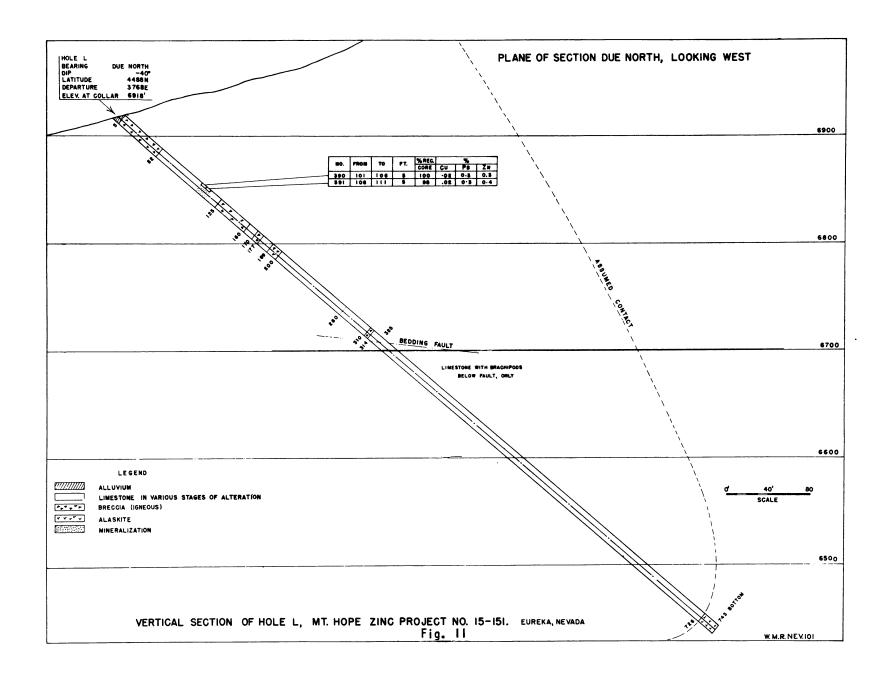


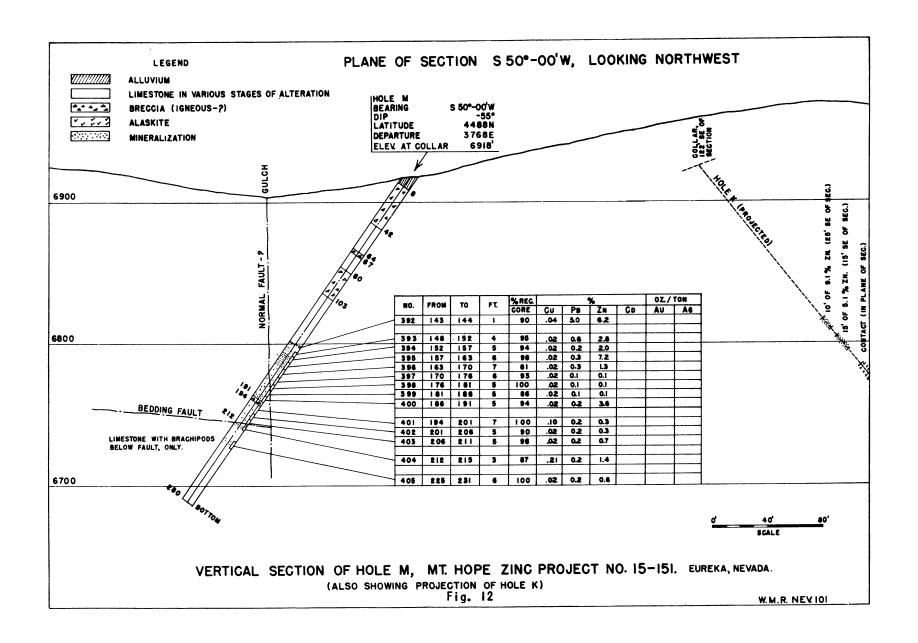


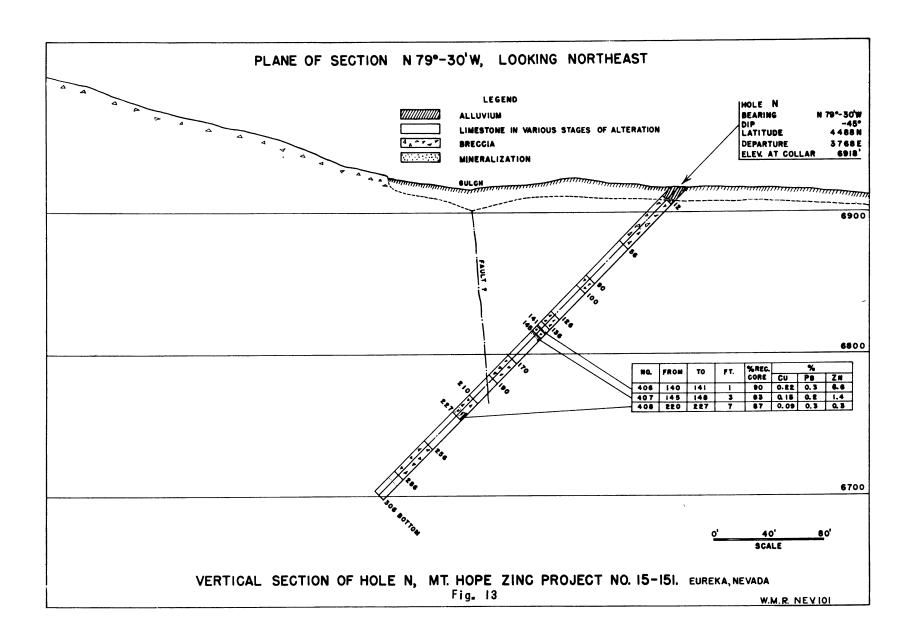


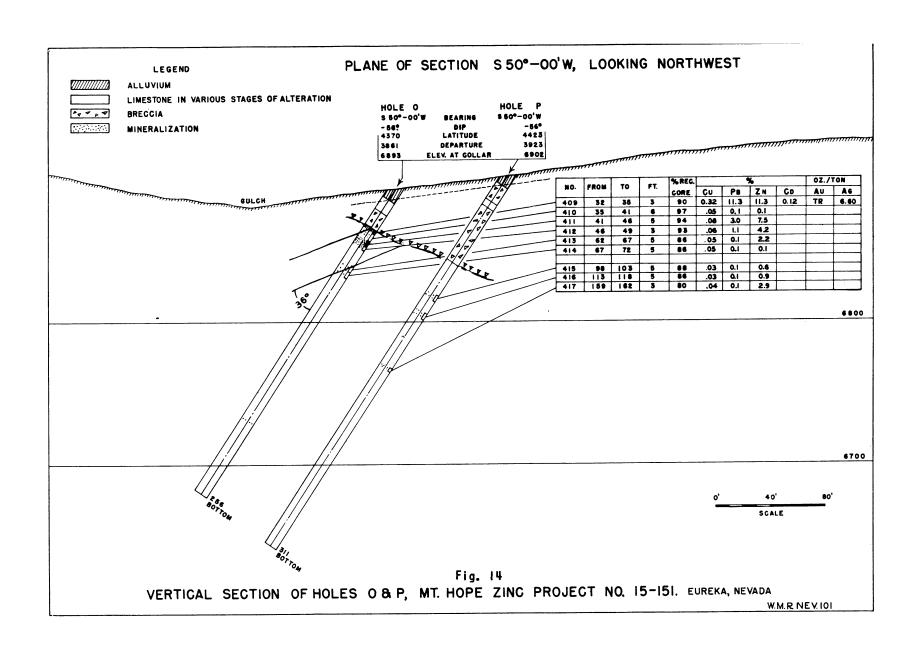


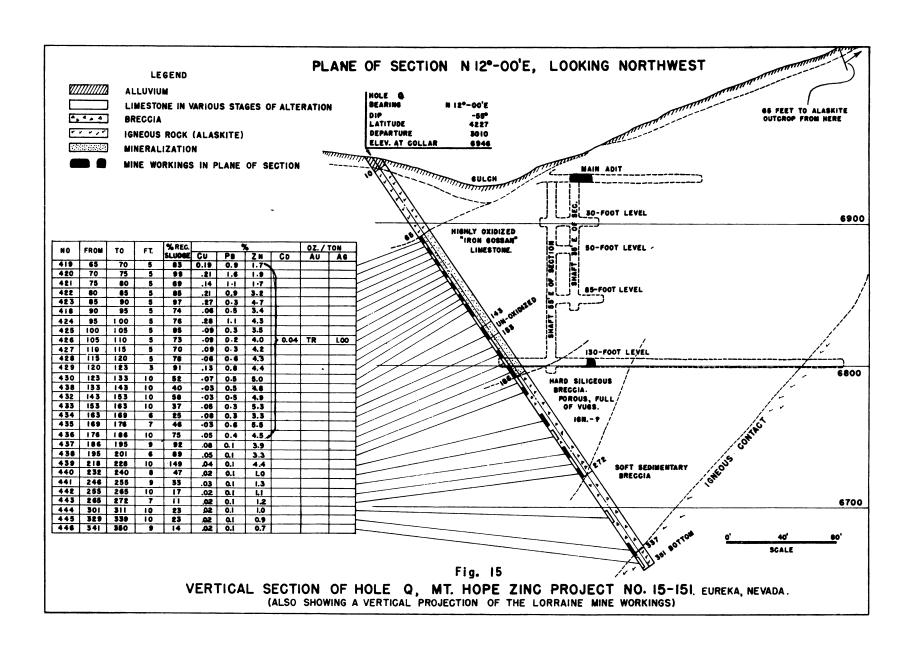


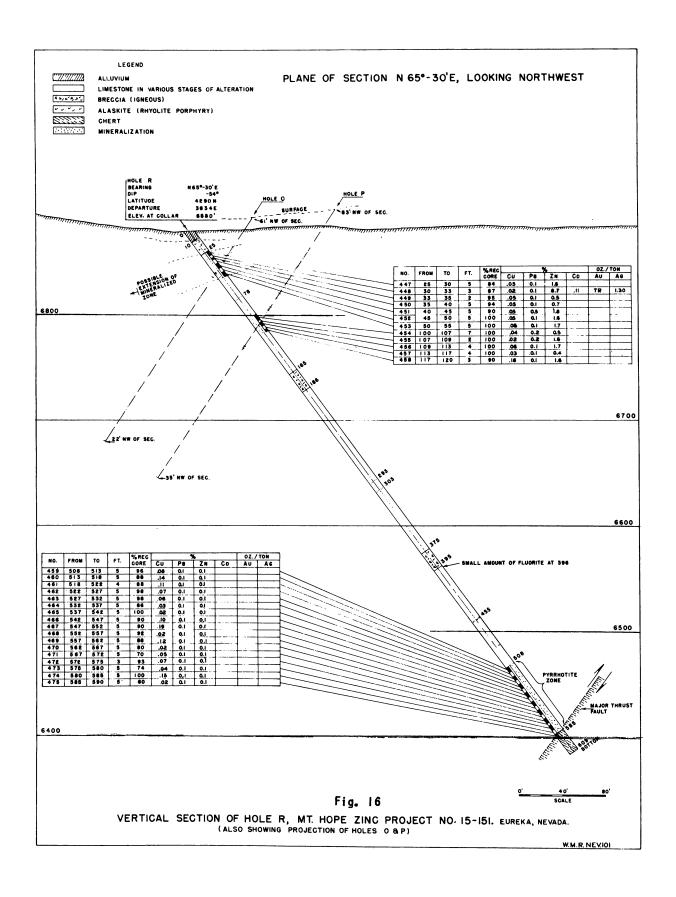












assaying 45.6 percent Zn, 14.6 percent Fe, and 1.6 percent insol. The maximum grade of concentrate obtained was 46.4 percent Zn, and microscopic examination indicated that a high degree of mineralogical purity had been obtained.

WORK DONE BY THE BUREAU OF MINES

The work first outlined by the Bureau called for the exploration of three ore horizons by core drilling to investigate continuity of mineralization, as suggested by geologic reports and by the Bureau's previous examinations. As exploration progressed, the above theory was abandoned and drilling was confined to exploration in fracture zones and to ascertain a definite trend of mineralization. Ground explored by diamond drilling under Bureau supervision embraced an area roughly 2,320 feet long and 360 to 920 feet in width. Eighteen diamond-drill holes, lettered A to R, inclusive, were completed by the Bureau. With the exception of Q, holes A to R explored the sulfide area. Hole Q was in an oxide zone in the Lorraine area.

Four holes, C, D, E, and F, proved the existence of a flat-lying ore zone below the level of adit No. 1, as shown by cross-section figures. Hole G, which was virtually barren, delimited the eastern extension of this zone.

Holes A, B, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, and R were drilled in an endeavor to find some continuity of the mineralization and to establish a trend westward toward the Lorraine workings.

Holes B, H, J, K, O, and R passed through small zones of milling-grade ore and some submarginal ore zones also.

Holes I, L, N, and P penetrated only submarginal ore.

Hole Q, which was farthest to the west, was drilled in the oxide zone of the Lorraine area to determine the grade of the mineralization and to investigate the possibility of sulfide mineralization below the oxide formation. The hole encountered oxide ore of submarginal grade only, and further drilling in the Lorraine area was abandoned.

Plans showing the location of the drill holes and vertical sections showing the holes and sample analyses in the ore zones accompany the report.

The project work, supplemented by company drilling and development, proved the ore to be spotty. Continuity of mineralization can be established only by more closely spaced drill holes. The ore does not grade from a strongly mineralized zone to submarginal ore, but more often the mineralization starts and ends abruptly.