

NOTES ON THE SOUTH COMET MINE - DUNDAS

The writer when recently on a visit to the Dundas district made an inspection of the developmental work which has been in progress for some months past in the lower tunnel.

Since the present Company acquired the mine a steady developmental policy has ensued under the supervision of the Mine Manager (Mr. Gerald Ahern).

The results obtained have been very encouraging and the prospects of further satisfactory developments are most hopeful.

Hitherto productive work at this mine was confined to the upper levels where in the early days considerable quantities of galena were obtained. The general character of the ore consists of a fairly intimate mixture of galena, zinc blende, and pyrites, and other accessory minerals in lesser quantity in a gangue rock of siderite.

Galena is the chief constituent of the ore, and often occurs in distinct veins and lenses, which can be readily separated by napping and sorting.

Several years ago a Melbourne company took over the property from a local syndicate and spent a considerable sum of money in providing a concentrating plant including a flotation unit (estimated to treat 120 tons daily) also an aerial rope for ore transportation purposes. The efforts of this company to establish the mine on a payable basis were not successful. Following an intermittent period of productive work, operations were finally suspended, the company relinquishing all connection with the property.

The present company which recently took over the Mine and plant has almost exclusively confined its efforts to the work of extending the lower tunnel along the strike of the ore channel.

This tunnel commences at a point about 30 ft. above the creek level in the valley and takes a course of 143 degrees for a distance of 179 feet, the strike of the lode here takes a more easterly course to 135°.

Driving was recently commenced at a point 600 ft. from the entrance on a lens of ore which continued for a distance of 75 feet maintaining a width of 6 feet. The average metal content was 8 per cent Lead, 8 per cent Zinc, and 6 oz. Silver per ton; the next section of 50 feet was in poor grade, when another productive lens was entered which continued for a distance of 100 feet width 7 ft. The average assay of samples of this section are 12.6 per cent Lead 15.6 per cent Zinc, 9 oz. Silver per ton; the next 70 feet driven was along a poorer zone.

At a point 120 feet from face of the tunnel a cross cut has been driven westerly, and has penetrated the ore body a distance of 9 feet, making a total width, including what is exposed in the drive, of 16 feet.

The character of the ore exposed in the work latterly carried out is much more favourable for treatment than that of the upper levels. The galena has a marked tendency to segregation in more distinct veins, the silver content moreover has shown a considerable increase. These factors must have an important bearing on the future of the mine, both in regard to the gross value of the ore and its treatment for the separation of the constituent minerals.

The accession to the ore reserves as a result of the recent work is most encouraging, and with further developmental operations in the direction of that now proceeding a considerable increase should result.

The next tunnel level is vertically 200 ft. above, on the dip of the ore body, the distance through would be approximately 230 feet.

Between these respective tunnels no work has been carried out on the ore shoots referred to.

The long line of lode worked on the upper tunnel and its proved extension to the lower one with improved quality of ore should be sufficient encouragement to the present company to continue with the steady programme of developmental operations, which should eventually include connections between the levels in order that a definite estimate of the ore developed can be made.

Particulars of assays and other information concerning the progressive development of the mine were supplied by Mr. Ahern.

signed

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1st. April, 1930