

## **Home Canyon Mine (Cumberland Mine)**

The Home Canyon Mine is located about 4½ miles east of Montpelier, Idaho at the junction of Gertch Canyon and Montpelier Canyon. This location is immediately north of the Waterloo Mine (Figure 63). Development of this mine started in late 1916 on patented lode claims owned by the San Francisco Chemical Company (Bell, 1916), and consisted of several short adits, the longest of which was 190 feet (Gidel, 1919b). This adit was located on the Cumberland Lode claim in such a manner as to allow construction of a high ore bin and to also provide gravity loading facilities. While this 190-foot adit was entirely in footwall limestone, by turning the adit slightly westward, the ore zone would have been cut. In February, 1920, J. F. Nibley, Carlyle Nibley, E. L. Newhouse, C. W. Stimpson and H. Reed Smoot of Salt Lake City, Utah, filed articles of incorporation for the American Phosphate Company (a Utah-based corporation) with the county clerk of Bear Lake County (Paris Post, 1920c). It is interesting to note that at the time of incorporation of the American Phosphate Company, H. Reed Smoot was a U. S. Senator from Utah. The American Phosphate Company also filed to do business in Idaho with the Secretary of State on February 11, 1920 (unpublished State of Idaho records, 1996). This new company then entered into a 10-year lease for five of the patented lode claims from the San Francisco Chemical Company (Mansfield, 1927). These five claims, the Cumberland, Fentress, Jimtown, Obed, and Obey Lodes, had been acquired by the San Francisco Chemical Company in late 1915 or early 1916 from the patentee, the arch-rival United States Phosphate Company. Gidel (1919b) reported that these five claims were highly developable because of easier accessibility, steeper dip of the phosphate ore and good adit sites in Gertch Hollow (Canyon). The Overton Lode claim was of lesser importance because it had no phosphate above creek level but it could provide a right-of-way for a proposed rail spur to the property.

Plans for a railroad up Montpelier Canyon to serve both the Waterloo Mine and the Home Canyon Mine were being considered by the Bear Lake County commissioners (Paris Post, 1920d). By August 30, 1920, the American Phosphate Company had driven an entry about 400 feet along strike of the phosphate bed and had opened six 100-foot stopes (Mansfield, 1927). Ore was being shipped by truck at the rate of about 64 to 72 tons per day to the railhead in Montpelier and then on to a mill facility in California. Construction of a plant facility at the mine started in December, 1920 (Figure 64).

Development of the property and production continued until 1924. The on-site mill facility (Figure 65) consisted of complete crushing and drying equipment and employed an average of 4 to 6 men (Kirkham, 1925). By 1922, the underground development consisted of about 2,000 feet of drifts and tunnels (Kirkham, 1925; Service, 1966, 1967). In 1925, the property was idle and the American Phosphate Company relinquished its lease back to the San Francisco Chemical Company. The total production from the Home Canyon Mine at the time of lease relinquishment was about 20,000 tons (Service, 1966, 1967). The American Phosphate Company forfeited the rights to do business in Idaho on November 30, 1926 (unpublished State of Idaho records, 1996).

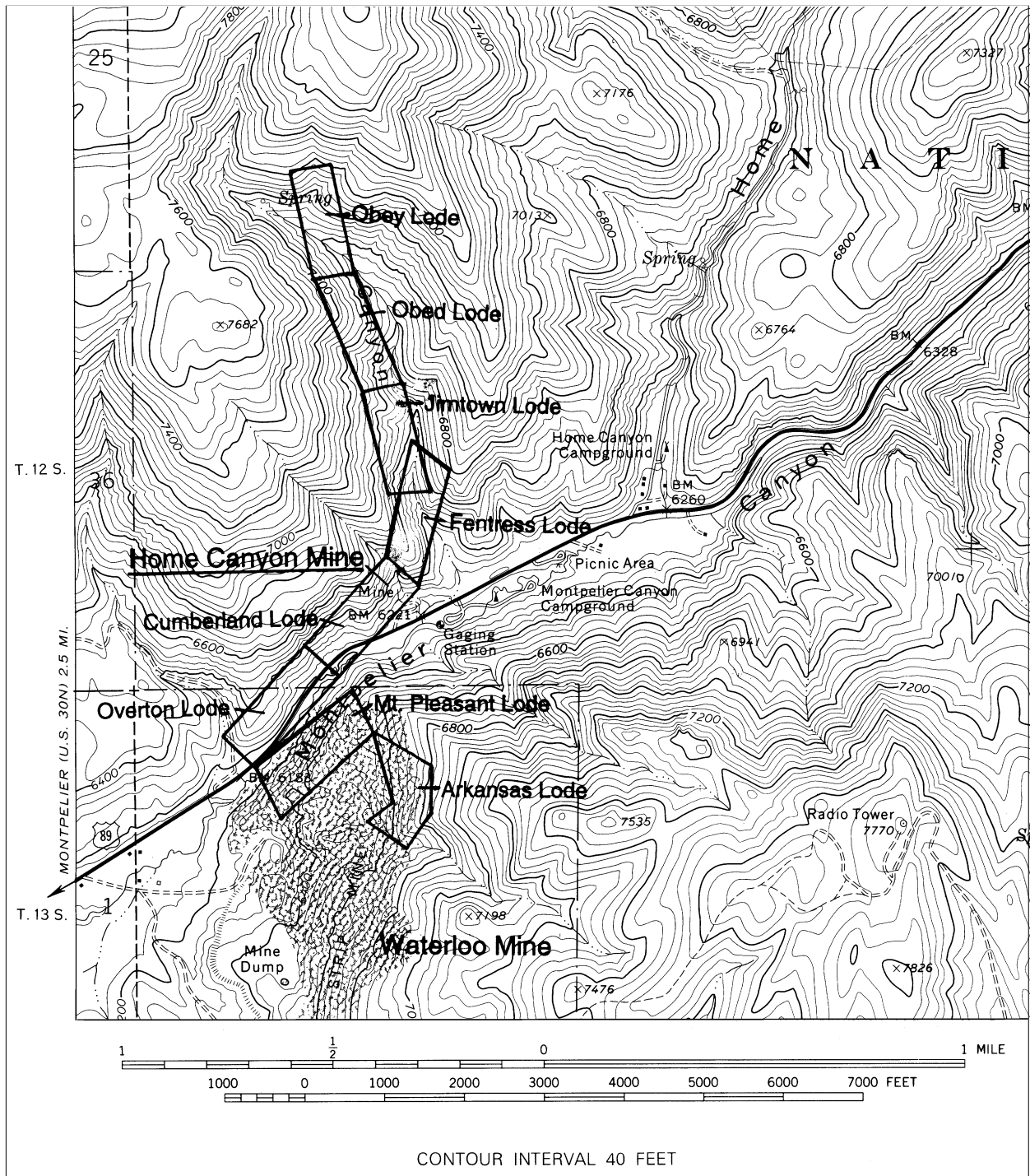


Figure 63. Map showing the location of the Home Canyon Mine and associated patented lode mining claims, Bear Lake County, Idaho.



Figure 64. Home Canyon Mine, American Phosphate Corporation plant under construction, 1921. Photo by V. R. D. Kirkham, courtesy of the Idaho Geological Survey.



Figure 65. Home Canyon Mine and plant of the American Phosphate Corporation , circa 1923. Photo by V. R. D. Kirkham, courtesy of the Idaho Geological Survey.

In 1953, The San Francisco Chemical Company reentered the old working of the Home Canyon Mine. The company drove the Cumberland crosscut and some drifting at a total expense of \$120,000 in order to prove some additional reserves to their holdings across the canyon at the Waterloo Mine (Service, 1966, 1967). There was no production associated with this activity. These operations were abandoned when the new mining activity ran into the old underground workings. Nothing came of this venture and the property went idle once again. The mill facilities were removed and the mine site abandoned. Today, nothing remains at the site except a caved adit (Figure 66).



Figure 66. Caved Home Canyon Mine portal, June 24, 1996. Photo by the author.