

Well-Known District Names Woven In History of Salmo's Colorful HB Mine

By P. F. HORTON

One of the co-discoverers of the H. B. Mine, in Cominco Magazine

The group of claims, which make up the H. B. Mine was staked wholly on the East side of Brisbane Mountain. The discovery came about quite by accident.

In 1910, I had been staking the Silver Fraction of the Aspen Group. To reach the location, I chose a route which took me across the Brisbane Mountain. When I reached the Big Four*,

(*Editor's note: The Big Four was one of three groups of claims already staked in the area. Eventually these groups became part of the H. B. property.)

along the way, I spoke to J. A. Benson who had been prospecting in that area for two years. He said that in his travels across Brisbane he had found nothing to encourage him. However I suggested that he accompany me and we might see something worthwhile on the way. Shortly after starting down the East slope I found a large piece of carbonate ore and we decided to stake a group of claims. They joined the Zincton claims on the East. To entitle each of us to a half share, we agreed to stake the claims in both our names. For a name we chose the first letter from each of our own surnames, and thus the property became known as the H.B.

IN MR. HORTON'S
OWN WORDS

"In subsequent trenching we found four separate ore bodies from which ore was shipped. They were the H.B. zinc ore body, H.B. lead ore body, Zincton lead ore body and Leadville lead ore body. From the H.B. inception it made mining history in the finding of new unknown minerals, one of which is now known as Spencerite. This has further been classified into six other previously unknown minerals. While overseas, I saw in B. C. House in London a large chunk of lead or galena from the Zincton lead ore body that was as bright as the day it was broken. I could hardly credit that it had not been tarnished.

"The H.B. proved difficult to dispose of. Finally in 1911 Cominco was induced to do a considerable amount of work which resulted in a good camp and workings opened up to extract the ore. On Cominco relinquishing their option, the owners shipped lead ore to Trail. The first shipments did not prove profitable due to the fall in the price of lead on 90-day settlement, and to clear the property of debt, shipments had to be continued in the hopes of a better lead price, which fortunately occurred and the property was got out of debt and had something to the good.

But, the owners had had enough

of shipping ore. W. R. Salsbury, the party who contracted hauling the ore, then obtained a lease at \$1 a ton royalty on the zinc ore, which he turned over to Lou Larsen of the Standard Furniture Company in Nelson retaining the hauling for himself. The price of zinc rose to around 30 cents a pound and it was reported Mr. Larsen was earning big money shipping the dump, while each owner was getting 25 cents a ton. Fortunately I had inserted a clause in the lease to the effect that on obtaining a bona fide purchaser the lease would end. In 1915 I succeeded in interesting Smith Curtis, a former Minister of Mines for B.C. He in turn got R. K. Neil to take over the property by getting Mr. Jameson of Spokane to put up \$2000. Mr. Jameson got \$60,000 when the property was turned over to the Butte & Superior of Montana for a reported six million dollars. In the meantime R. K. Neil was allowed \$5000 a month to look for other properties by the Hudson Bay Mining Co., the operating company of the H.B. It was at this time that Mr. Neil examined the Premier Mine at Portland Canal.

"When the property was turned back to the owners from the Butte & Superior, the United Eastern took an option on the Zincton, Garnet and Legal Tender mineral claims and did a lot of surface trenching on all the above claims. Mr. Mau-

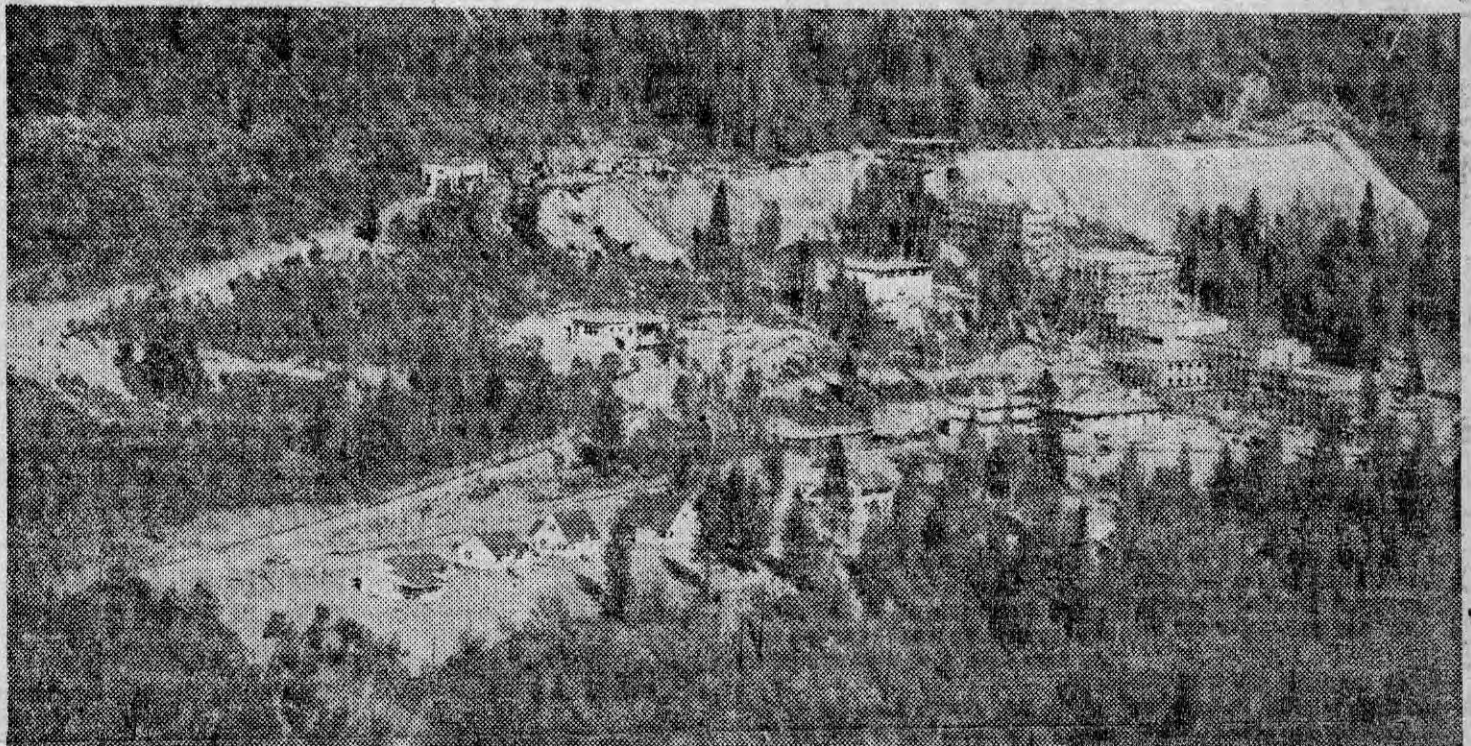
rice W. Bacon who had been associated with Mr. Neil then obtained an option on the above claims and did some drifting on the south slope of the Zincton mineral claim. Mr. Rush J. White was in charge of the work for the United Eastern of the Jackling interests.

"The last option was given to the Victoria Syndicate in 1925 who drove No. 4 cross-cut tunnel and did a large amount of drifting on that level.

"Sometime after the owners of the H.B. accepted an offer from Cominco for the H.B., Mrs. Vella-cott, my sister, and I threw the Zincton and Garnet mineral claims in gratis.

"Shortly after the sale of the H.B. and Zincton groups I was able to dispose of the Aspen Group to the Salmo Malartic Mines Limited by agreeing to operate the property and by taking some stock, which I still hold."

(Editor's note: Mr. Horton now lives in Victoria, and is still actively engaged in mining. The H.B. Mine, which he helped to discover, was prepared for production by Cominco and was slated to go into operation during the spring of 1953. The market situation caused a postponement of the opening. However, it is ready to go into production as soon as conditions become more favorable.)



HB Mine had come a long way when this picture was taken. Picture shows some of the work Cominco did on the site in preparing in for production.