

A surprising feature of the early placer operations is the relatively small area worked in proportion to the production of \$7,000,000 with which the Tuscarora placers are credited. The workings are confined to the gullies on the gently sloping sagebrush-covered hills bordering the west side of Independence Valley. Typical old workings, now almost obscured by cloudburst action, are shown in figure 22. Eureka Gulch and Gardner Ravine are known to have been very rich. The flat, shallow ravines draining south into Independence Valley also yielded well.

The depth of the gravel worked in former operations varied from four to ten feet. The gold occurs as dust and nuggets largely concentrated on bedrock. The largest nugget found in

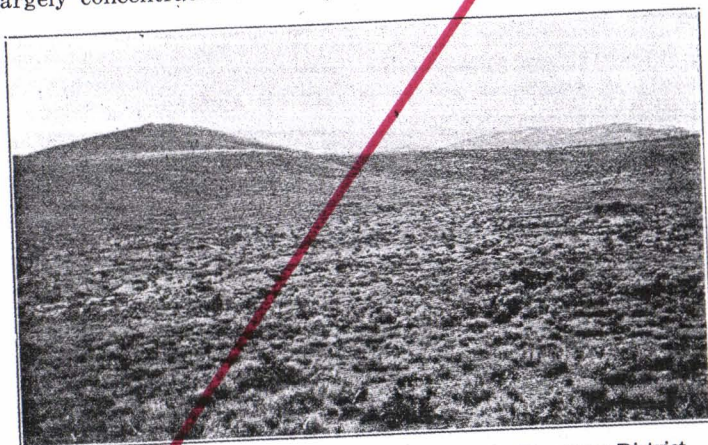


Figure 22. Placer tailings from old workings in the Tuscarora District.

the District weighed nine pounds, although it contained considerable quartz. Nuggets weighing up to one ounce were common. The bedrock is largely rhyolite, which is the principal rock of the District. The source of the gold is presumably the gold veins that occur in rhyolite and andesite north and west of the diggings.

After 1900 only small sporadic placer operations were carried on. In recent years a small amount of gold has been recovered by individuals. The Harris claims, one and one-half miles west of Tuscarora, have been worked for a number of years by an operator who uses a Chinese rocker. In 1931, a group of men sluiced the gravel in Review Gulch, a short distance west of town. Water was obtained from several springs in the vicinity.

This work was confined to the lower part of the gulch in an area that may have been overlooked by the early placer miners. In the same year some placer mining also was done in Stovepipe Gulch, water for sluicing being obtained from the old Stovepipe mine shaft. In 1934 and 1935, a few itinerant placer miners prospected the District for virgin areas rich enough to be worked by hand methods, but the results of this work were not encouraging.

A United States Geological Survey report by Emmons, in 1910,¹⁷ states: "A large acreage of ground west of Tuscarora has been located and sampled with drills. It is said that much of this ground will pay to work with dredges, and two companies are planning such operations. A large number of samples are reported to have given an average of about 14 cents (based on gold value of \$20.67 per ounce) per cubic yard."

No dredge has operated in the District, and, if the above information can be checked by additional sampling and the other factors are favorable, this ground may offer interesting dredging possibilities. Perhaps sufficient water for dredging purposes can be obtained from the old Dexter gold mine at Tuscarora, now flooded. A large volume of water was encountered in the underground workings of this mine when it was worked in the early days.

ESMERALDA COUNTY KLONDYKE DISTRICT

The Klondyke District is 14 miles south of Tonopah in the southern Klondyke hills in east Esmeralda County, near the Nye County border. The lode deposits in the district were discovered by Court and Bell in 1899, but it is said that some Chinese placer miners were active in the District in the middle seventies. For several years following the discovery of the lode deposits, some placer mining was carried on by dry-washing methods. One nugget valued at \$1,200 is reported to have been found. In general, the results of the placer mining were not very profitable; in recent years there has been no placer mining in the District.

TULE CANYON

The Tule Canyon District is ten miles south of Lida in south Esmeralda County at the southern end of the Silver Peak Range. Tule Canyon is tributary to the north end of Death Valley. Placer gold was discovered in the canyon in 1876, although it is said that these placers were worked by Mexicans prior to

¹⁷Emmons, William H., A Reconnaissance of Some Mining Camps in Elko, Lander, and Eureka Counties, Nevada: U. S. Geol. Survey Bull. 408, 1910, p. 62.