

MAGRE MINE
Westmoreland Coal Company
Northern border of Sewickley Creek and
Pennsylvania Railroad
Yukon
Westmoreland County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-294

HAER
PA
65-YUKO,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

MAGEE MINE

HAER No. PA-294

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Location: Yukon, on northern border of Sewickley Creek and Pennsylvania Railroad, South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania

Date of Construction: 1908

Builder: Westmoreland Coal Company

Present Owner: unknown

Present Use: abandoned and deteriorating

Significance: Impressive ashlar sandstone structures that formed the colliery at Magee Mine are unlike the red brick or wood mine buildings generally found throughout the region. Double mine portal has massive ashlar sandstone lintel.

Project Information: In February, 1987, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) began a multi-year historical and architectural documentation project in southwestern Pennsylvania. Carried out in conjunction with America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), HAER undertook a comprehensive inventory of Westmoreland County to identify the region's surviving historic engineering works and industrial resources.

Compiler: Gray Fitzsimons and Kenneth Rose, Editors

DESCRIPTION: Magee Mine at Yukon is located on the northern border of Sewickley Creek and the former Pennsylvania Railroad. A number of distinctive stone buildings remain in place though they are abandoned and deteriorated. These impressive ashlar sandstone structures that formed the colliery at Yukon are unlike any other mine buildings in the region. The largest of these buildings at Yukon is the powerhouse. Located along the abandoned Pennsylvania Railroad right-of-way, the powerhouse contained a boiler room and an engine room. The boiler room is housed in a tall one-story section of the building with ashlar sandstone walls and large arched windows at the floor level and above at an upper level. It contains a concrete and earth floor and riveted steel trusses supporting a hipped roof and monitor. Adjoining the boiler room to the west is the engine room, a one-story ashlar sandstone building with a brick floor, a gable roof, and arched windows. The powerhouse measures 150' x 50'. The building rests on a stone foundation. All of the power-generating and boiler equipment has been removed. Two iron chimney stacks that stood next to the boiler room along the north side of the building have been removed.

Located to the east, on the bank of Sewickley Creek, the hoist house is a tall one-story ashlar sandstone building with a full basement; its slate roof with frame monitor has partially collapsed, though the riveted steel Fink trusses remain. The building measures 48' x 44' and contains a circular window at the gable end, tall arched windows, and a stone foundation. A stone marker at the gable end proclaims "WCCO 1908." None of the hoisting machinery remains in the building. Adjacent to the hoist house is a one-story red-brick building that housed electrical equipment used in conjunction with the electric-powered hoist. A large wood-frame tramway and tippie once stood between the powerhouse and the hoist house. It extended over the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks but was demolished after the mine closed.

About 150' north of the machine shop is the powerhouse, a tall one-story ashlar sandstone building that measures 65' x 46'. It had a hipped roof covered with slate, and a gable-roof monitor. The roof system was supported by riveted steel Fink trusses which have collapsed. Still remaining are the stone walls and the arched windows.

West of the machine shop is the entrance to the mine. Ashlar sandstone retaining walls lead to the double-portal entrance. Spanning each portal is a massive ashlar sandstone lintel. Near the mine entrance is a battery-powered locomotive. It dates from the 1950s and is in fair condition. About 50' south of the machine shop is the office and supply building. It is a one-story ashlar sandstone structure and measures 27' x 17'. It has been partially destroyed by a fire but retains its arched window openings. The roof is missing and the interior is exposed to the elements.

The cap house is a small one-story common-bond red-brick building. It measures 12' x 12' and contains a gable roof, covered with sheet metal, and a concrete foundation. Near the cap house is a small one-story wood-frame building with board-and-batten siding. Its gable roof is covered with slate. A lamphouse, of common-bond red-brick construction with hipped slate roof and cupola, once stood near the powerhouse but has recently been demolished. Many archeological features and stone walls are present in the complex. After the mine closed in 1954, the site was converted to an automobile repair shop and a junk yard. All structures are now abandoned and deteriorating. No machinery is extant.

Located in South Huntingdon Township, the town of Yukon contains about thirty company-built houses situated in four curved rows on First to Fourth streets. The company store burned, and there are no other extant company structures in the town. The residences include both single-family and double houses. They are of wood-frame construction and contain either one or two stories. There are about fifteen double houses and fifteen single-family houses. These latter type of dwellings feature hipped roofs, brick chimneys, and multi-light windows.

Another group of sixteen company-built houses stands northwest of Yukon in Sewickley Township, west of Lower Whyel. These are single-family dwellings of wood construction with gable roofs and hollow clay-tile foundations.

HISTORY: This slope-entry mine, opened by the Westmoreland Coal Company in 1908, was named after James Magee, a member of the company's original board of directors. The company developed this colliery in Sewickley Township and built a group of houses for its workers in the nearby village of Yukon, South Huntingdon Township. Coal was extracted from the 81"-thick Pittsburgh seam. By 1910 the company employed 443 persons at its Magee mine. Superintendent E. G. Smith resided in one of the larger company-built houses in Yukon. In 1910 workers at the Magee mine produced nearly 429,000 tons of coal, almost all of which was shipped to market via the Pennsylvania Railroad. The company employed eighty miners, 235 machine loaders, and thirty-two mules and horses to haul coal from the mine.

By 1940 the work force had been reduced to 275 miners producing about 328,000 tons of coal. At that time the mine used eleven trolley locomotives to haul the coal from the mine, although the firm was still using about twenty-nine horses and mules. A preparation plant was built at the Magee mine, with water for the coal washer supplied from a reservoir constructed in near Lower Whyel. Operations at the mine ceased in 1954.

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