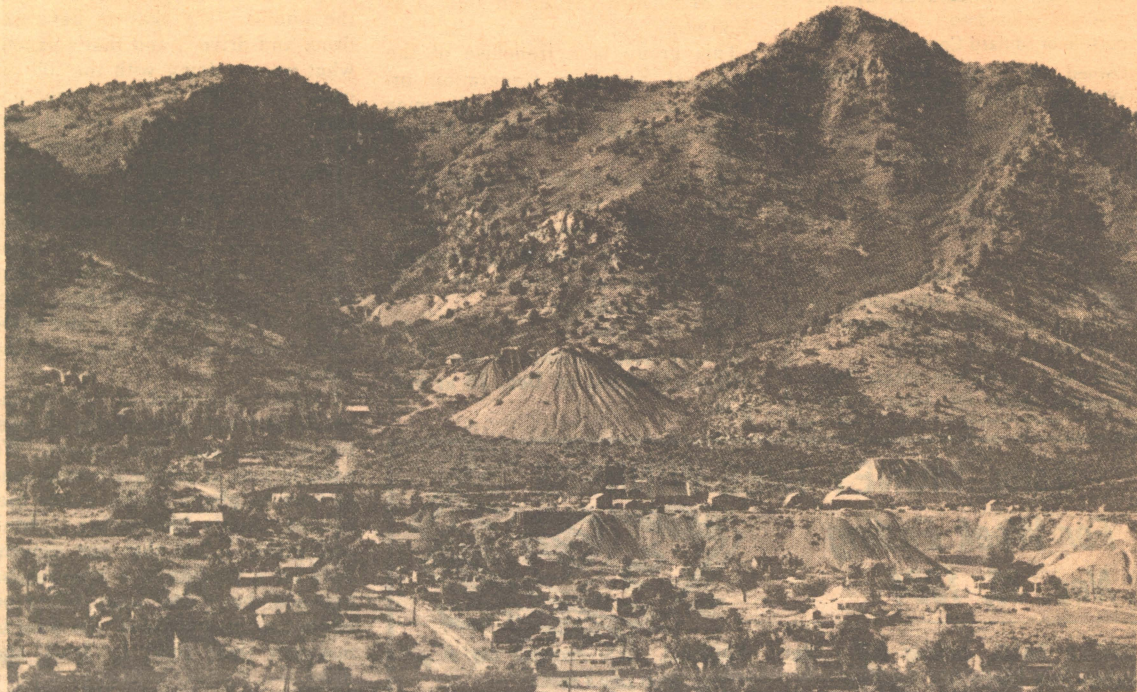


# The Tintic Mining District



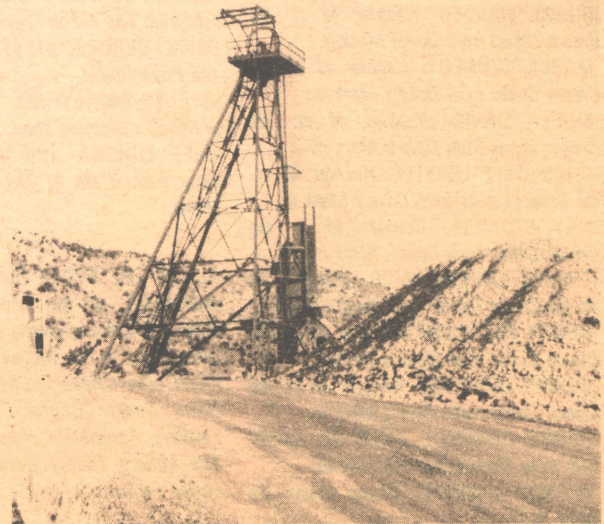
At right - The old Eagle and Blue Bell silver-lead-gold-copper mine, just south of the town of Eureka, was last worked by leasees in the 1950's.



**Discovering**  
MILLARD  
COUNTY  
AND AREAS NEARBY

By Laurance P. James

The Tintic mining region, located in Juab and Utah Counties about 50 miles north of Delta, is situated in a desert mountain range and adjacent valleys. At current prices, it is the second largest historic producer of metals in Utah. The high silver content of its base metal ores, commonly accompanied by unusually high gold content, has made the district famous in western history. As of 1959, it ranked 20th in the U.S. as a gold producer. Next to Bingham, whose production of gold as a by-product of copper overshadows all other districts, Tintic ranks second in Utah gold production, while Mercur, 30 miles to the northwest, has produced half as much. In silver production it holds first place, followed closely by Park City.



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The commercial center of the Tintic mining district is Eureka, a town of 670 people in 1980. It lies in Juab County, just west of the Utah County line. Mammoth in a gulch 5 miles to the south and west, has a dozen houses set among old mine dumps, while the outlying villages of Tintic Junction, Elberta, and Goshen are supported by both ranches and miners' paychecks.

**METAL PRODUCTION**

Tintic ores typically contained a number of metals, as indicated by table 1. Other metals, recovered but often not paid for or acknowledged by ore purchasers, included substantial arsenic, cadmium, antimony, and bismuth. Substantial zinc was later recovered by re-treating old slag, and is not reported. Parts of the district contain substantial manganese, of which shipments have been made to the steel works in Utah Valley and elsewhere. Deposits of high

grade white clays, both fire clay and a unique halloysite clay used as a catalyst in oil refining, were mined from altered sedimentary and volcanic rocks in both surface and underground workings.

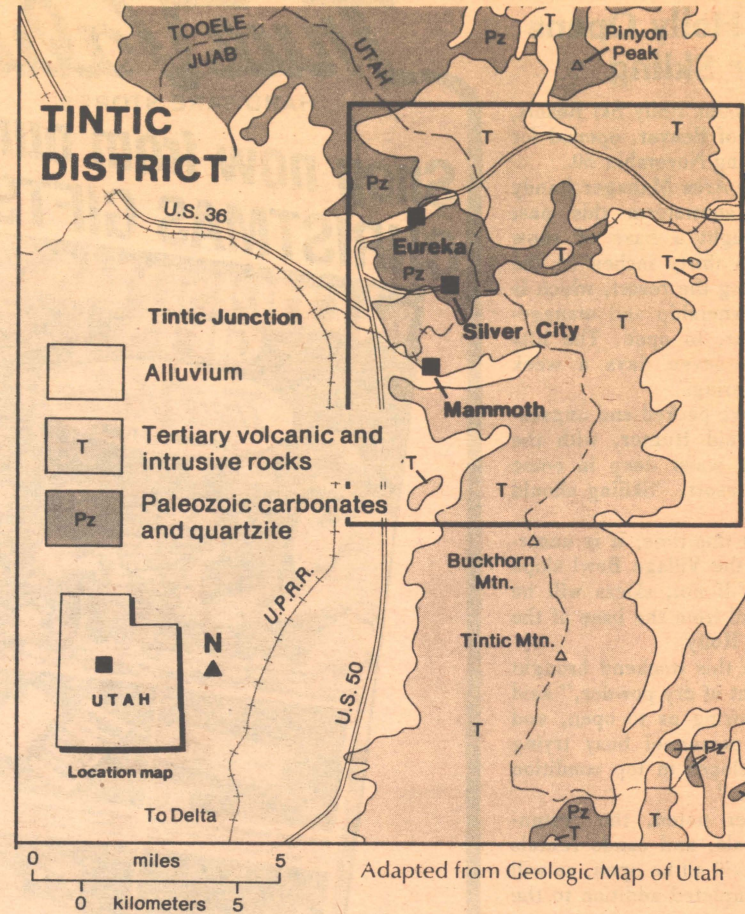
The complex mixtures of metals and minerals in the ores have always created difficulties in their extraction. While the ores were deposited as sulfides, deep oxidation and weathering have both enriched and complicated the character of the ores. The water table at Eureka stands at approximately 1800 feet below the surface

This mineralogist's paradise has been a mill metallurgist's nightmare. A variety of processes have been tried

but only a few plants have proved more than marginally successful. Whenever ores were rich enough, the optimum treatment was direct shipment to one of the four big smelters that formerly surrounded Salt Lake City. The closing of three of these plants — at Murray,

**TABLE 1. Metallic ore and metals produced from Tintic mining district, 1869 to the present (in thousands of English units)**

	Ore, short tons/ (in thous.)	Gold, troy oz./ (in thous.)	Silver, troy oz./ (in thous.)	Copper, tons/ (in thous.)	Lead, tons/ (in thous.)	Zinc, tons/ (in thous.)
1869-1975	18,358 <sup>1</sup>	2,687.8	269,425	124.6	1,133	207
1976-1982 <sup>2</sup>	950	50.6	4,029	1.9	12.7	27.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,313</b>	<b>2,738.4</b>	<b>273,454</b>	<b>137.3</b>	<b>1,145.7</b>	<b>234.5</b>



Midvale, and finally, Tooele — which specialized in lead-silver-zinc ores, as well as the large custom milling plants at Bauer and Midvale, helped bring a recession to the district that is evident today to anyone driving through its towns.

**T**HE DISTRICT remains a testing ground for new ideas.

The biggest current undertaking is the deepening of the old Apex Standard Number 2 shaft by Sunshine Mining Company. This shaft, sunk in the 1930s, has been rehabilitated. Preparations are underway to drive from the 1300 foot level station to provide better access, ventilation and drainage for the Burgin ore bodies. Sunshine also leases the

Eureka Standard mine, and plans exploratory drifting toward the old workings. It appears probable that precious and base metals will be produced from Tintic long into the future, contributing tax dollars and employment to Utah.

The district contains known reserves and resources of zinc-lead ore (whose recovery is made difficult by depth, water, and lack of smelters), ores with high precious metals content (of which known deposits are being explored),

and geologic environments to tempt the prospector and explorationist. Based on past mining statistics, the big company may have difficulty proving a large, easily mineable ore reserve. The disappearance of the leaser and the custom

- **The Millard County Gazette**, 7  
December 4, 1984

smelter from the region has changed some of the economics of mining. But the Tintic district clearly will remain important in Utah's metals industry. □