

Montour No. 1 (Bob Ciminell ©2012)

Montour No.1 Mine was located at Southview, PA, west of Venice off of PA Route 50 and between McDonald Viaduct and Gilmore Junction on the Montour Railroad. Montour No. 1 was one of three new mines the Pittsburgh Coal Company opened as the railroad constructed its Mifflin Extension in 1914. Men and supplies for the new mine were delivered by the Wabash Pittsburgh Terminal Railroad at George Station west of Venice Siding. (George will be the connection to the new Westland Branch when it is completed later this year.)

The exact date when Montour No. 1 closed is not known. The mine is listed in the PA Bureau of Mines annual report for 1932, but looks abandoned in the 1939 aerial photos of Southview.

Montour No. 1 was a shaft mine that was about 100 feet deep. The coal seam was mined toward the north. Montour No. 1 abutted the Primrose Mine on the northwest and the Jumbo Mine on the northeast. It is believed that miners living in the McDonald area could access Montour No. 1 through the old Jumbo Mine workings.

Montour No. 1 was featured in a lengthy article in Coal Age magazine in 1916 titled, *New Operation in an Old Field*. Interestingly, the article refers to the coal seam in that area as “thin-seam coal” although it averaged about 5 to 6 feet in thickness. A 1930 report shows the seam at Montour No. 1 to be 55 inches thick, about 4.5 feet, and the mine was producing 2,500 tons per day.

The village of Southview, which was simply referred to as Montour No. 1 when the mine was opened, was considered to be a first-class miners’ patch. At least the author of the article in Coal Age thought so: “The Pittsburgh Coal Co. is progressive in its attitude toward its employees, and without forcing upon them any charity, it takes reasonable precautions to insure their welfare and contentedness. Some relief from monotony is given by boarding houses, stores and the houses for superintendents and foremen which are somewhat removed from the main part of each village. The situations of the villages are good, as they are placed on the summits or slopes of hills. An innovation is the bathhouses or washrooms which have been provided. These are small houses, one for each two dwellings, built across the lot lines in the rear of the dwellings.”

Check out the maps and other images below for more information on Montour No. 1 Mine.

One of the most detailed photos we have of Montour No. 1 was contributed by Mike Feathers, a resident of Southview.



This was Southview in 2010. Montour No. 1 was located in the wooded area south of the village and on the north side of the former Wabash Pittsburgh Terminal/Pittsburgh & West Virginia/Norfolk and Western/Norfolk Southern railroad tracks. For reference, the streets going north to south are, Brown St., Wabash St., an alley, Main St. and Southview Road. From east to west they are Kler St., Pleasant St. and Church St.



The topographic map shows the Montour No. 1 mine dump and the Montour Railroad main track coming down from the north. Note that the mine was located in a stream bed, which brought it closer to the coal seam.



This photo shows Montour No. 1 when it was under construction around 1914. The multi-story building on the left housed the offices, supplies, and miners change area. The shaft was for men and equipment and also for removing waste from the mine.



This is another view of the waste hoist and the mine fan.

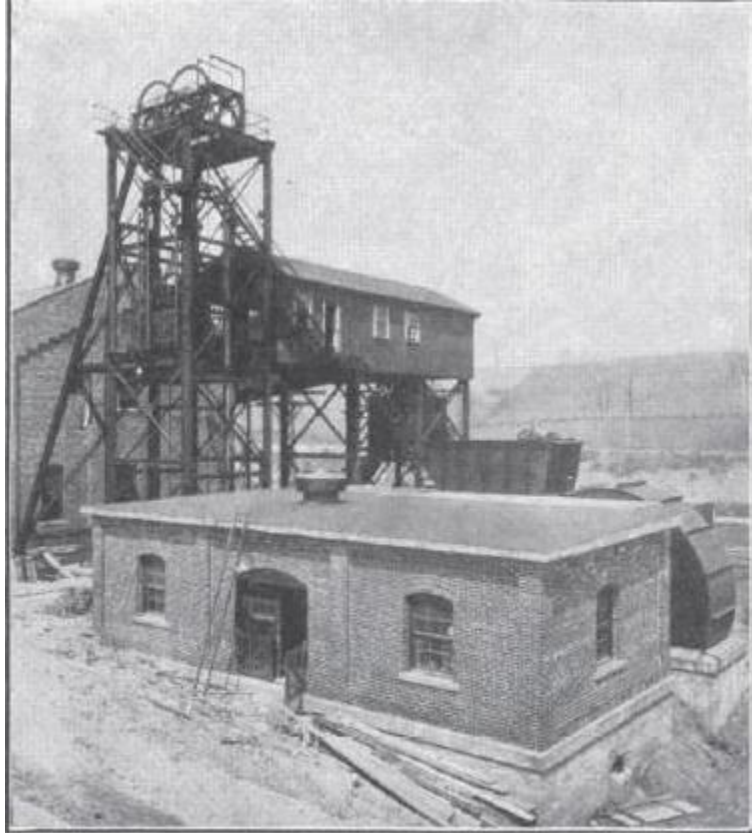


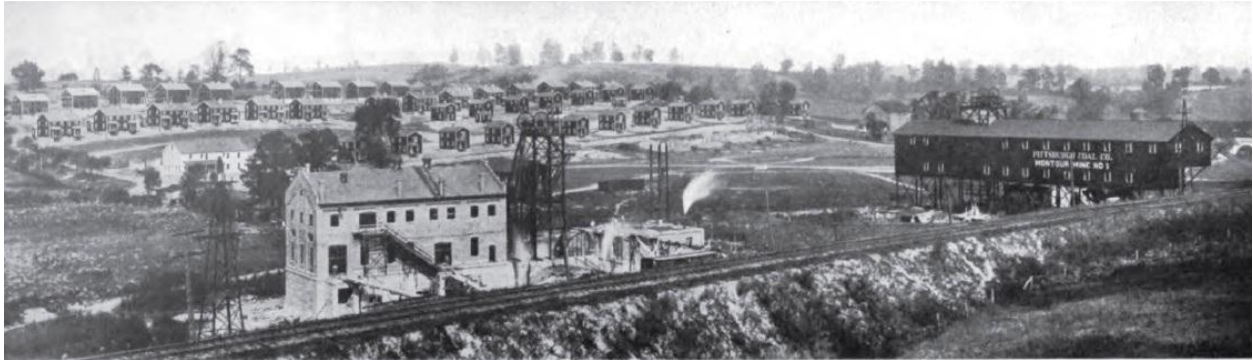
FIG. 2. FAN HOUSE AND HEADFRAME OVER ROCK SHAFT, MONTOUR MINE NO. 1

This photograph from 1916 shows the completed mine with coal cars under the tibble for loading. The tibble and coal hoist are also shown.



FIG. 1. TIBBLE AND HOIST HOUSE AT MONTOUR MINE NO. 1

This is another view of the completed Montour No. 1 Mine with the village of Southview in the background. The steam emanating from the powerhouse indicates the mine was in operation. Southview was recognized as a model village for coal miners.



A description of the equipment and other items installed at Montour No. 1 to get production up to 3,000 tons per day

Montour No. 1.—24,600 feet of 40-pound T iron laid and bonded; 62 switches of 40-pound T iron laid complete; 28,550 feet of 60-pound T iron laid and bonded; 32 switches of 60-pound T iron laid complete. Laid 56,900 feet of 20-pound T iron track. Made 382 shelter holes along haulage roads. Made 2 sumps, one 15 by 16 by 8 and the other 10 by 8 by 4. Built 329 permanent brick stoppings, 17 brick overcasts, 4 undercasts, also 2 brick pump houses. Laid 5,490 feet of 3-inch, 300 feet of 2½-inch, and 8,000 feet of 2-inch water lines. Hung 21,825 feet of 4-0 trolley wire inside; 12,950 feet of 4-0 and 14,600 feet of 2-0 machine wire; and 36,800 feet of No. 4 machine wire in entries. Installed 700 Edison electric storage battery mine lamps complete with charging racks and motors; also 1 General Electric storage battery locomotive complete with charging set. Built brick house for same. Installed 1 Atlas steel electric drive slate larry; 2 electric driven Mulholland chain hauls, for empties and loads at bottom of shaft; 2 electric driven chain hauls on tippie for empties; 1 eleven and a half ton Baldwin-Westinghouse locomotive, and 1 eight-ton Jeffrey locomotive; one 5½ Deming pump delivering water to surface, and two 5 by 6 Deming pumps inside. Installed Orenstein-Arthur Koppel Company tracks and switches at bottom of shaft with Mining Safety Device Company switch alternating attachments; also Mining Safety Device Company double cagers with release keys and stops on cages.

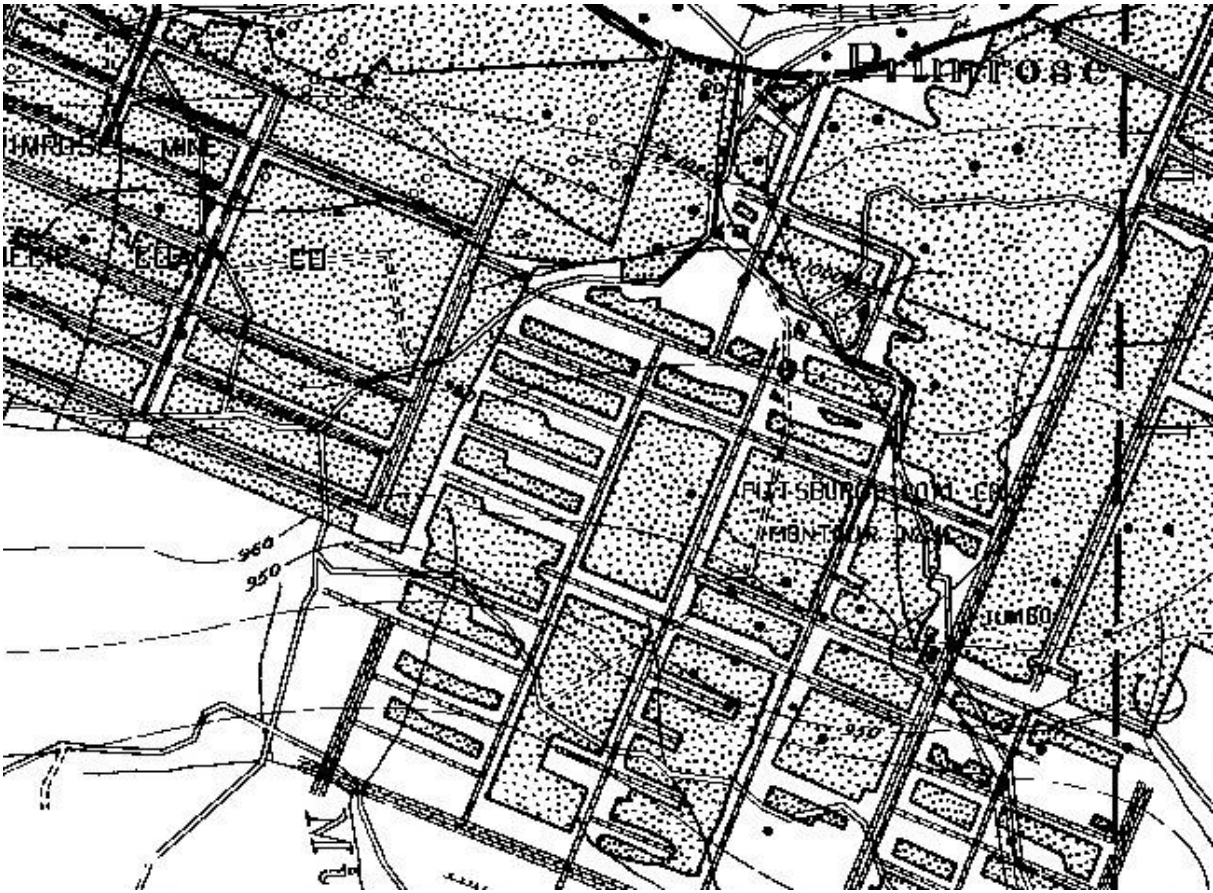
Installed 2 Connellsville M. and M. Company double length cages, and one in reserve; 1 electric driven Vulcan 300 H. P. double conical drum hoist for hoisting coals, complete with air controlled brakes, and overwinding device.

On coal tippie: Installed 1 Phillips double screening outfit; 2 Phillips 10-ton quick weighing 5,000-pound dial scale; 2 No. 5 Phillips automatic cross-over dumps; 1 electric driven double Heyl and Patterson cager; 2 Mining Safety Company automatic car feeds operated by action of dumps.

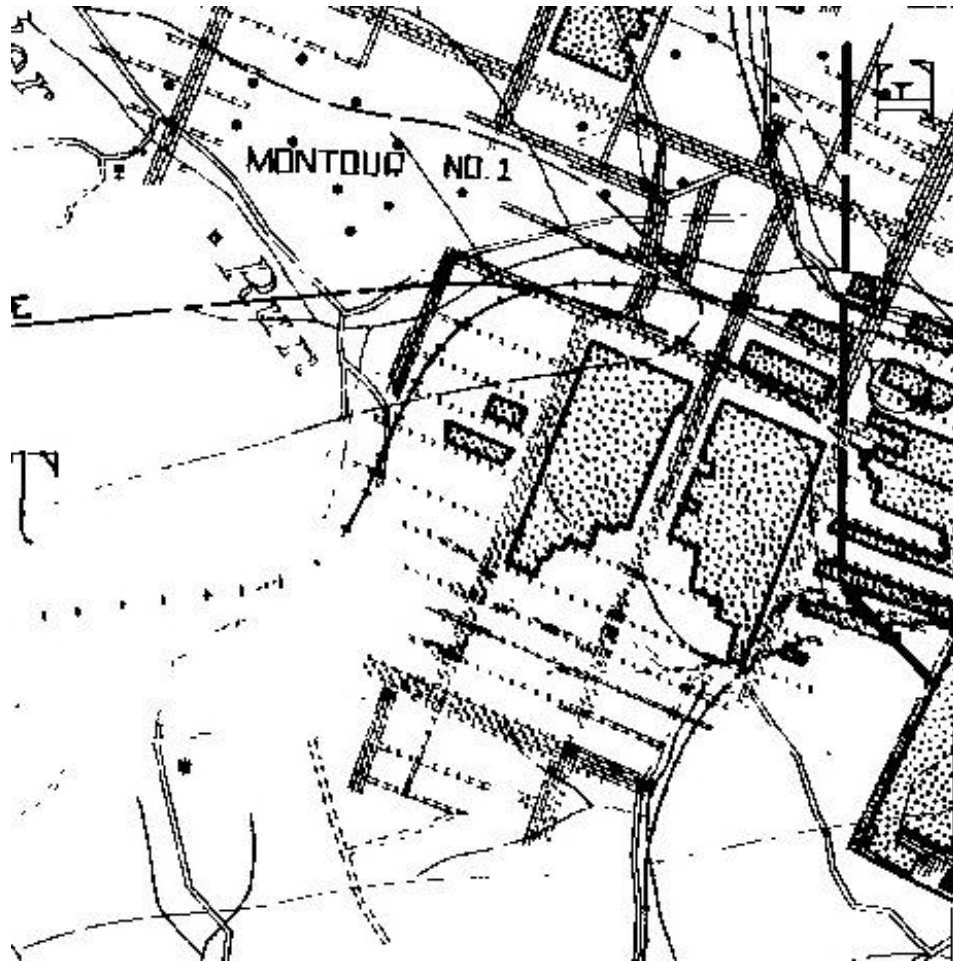
Supply Tippie and Hoist: 2 Connellsville M. and M. Company single length cages in use and one in reserve; 1 Lidgerwood hoist to pull loaded car from cage to slate dump; 1 electric driven Vulcan 75 H. P. double conical drum hoist, complete with air controlled brakes and signal outfit; also 1 Connellsville 15 by 6 double inlet reversible fan driven by a 60 H. P. General Electric motor.

Sub-station: Installed 2 generator sets 550 volts, 1 General Electric switchboard complete, 3 transformers, 1 air compressor.

The northern portion of Montour No. 1, with Primrose to the northwest and Jumbo to the northeast. This map was made in the 1930s and it appears there was a connection from Jumbo into No. 1 mine.



This map shows the southern workings in Montour No. 1 as they were in the 1930s.



This 1939 aerial photo is the best illustration of how the mine and miners' village looked when it was abandoned. The office and washroom building is on the left, but the tibble has been removed. You can barely make out the mine spur connection with the Montour main track in the lower right. Compare the layout of the village and the small cluster of homes to the right of the tracks with the area as it exists today.



The view in 1958 shows a lot of changes in Southview.



In this 1967 photo, Southview has continued to undergo changes, as has the old mine dump.

