

Scott Mine (Bob Ciminel ©)

Montour Railroad Milepost 6

Montour Trail Milepost 5

The first coal mine we will discuss in our coverage of the mines along the Montour Railroad is the Scott mine. The mine was located west of the Penn Lincoln Parkway (PA 60) behind the Lowe's Home Improvement Store in the Pointe at North Fayette shopping center. The mine entrance was below Montour Presbyterian Church, which has remained the one enduring landmark over the years to help identify the approximate locations of the mine openings.

In 1914, the Hammill Mine was opened by the Hammill Company, headquartered in Crafton. The mine operated under the Hammill name at least until 1920 when the record shows it was taken over and renamed the Scott mine. The Hammill mine is on a list of coal mines operating on the Montour in 1914. There was another mine listed as the Staub mine, which may have been east of Scott mine; however, there is no information available on that mine.

The first record of the Scott mine appears in 1923 when it was operated by the Camden Coal Company. By 1931 the mine had been taken over by the Montour Collieries Company. There is little information available on these two companies.

The earliest production records for the Scott mine begin in 1931 when it was owned by the Montour Collieries Company. That year, the mine shipped 57,856 tons on the Montour Railroad, operated for 122 days and had 75 employees. The following year, 1932, the mine only shipped 9,813 tons, was open for only 63 days, but still had 71 employees.

By 1934, Scott mine produced 8,066 tons, shipped 4,602 by truck, but burned 3,464 tons in its own boilers, operated for 258 days, and was down to 11 employees

As with all the mines along the Montour Railroad between Beaver Grade Road and Imperial, the Pittsburgh Coal Seam was located approximately 1,100 feet above sea level and dipped toward the southwest. Surface elevations varied between 1,200 and 1,300 feet along the hilltops, so the mines penetrated the seam from the northeast side of the hill and had to convey their coal almost 200 feet down to the railroad, which ran along Montour Run at an average elevation of 870 feet.

Figure 1 is a satellite image that has been marked up with the locations associated with the mine.

The mine siding had a facing point switch for eastbound trains, but from the photo it's hard to tell if the siding was entered from the Montour main track or from Scott Siding. My guess would be from Scott Siding because that would be the easiest way to service the mine and to store empty and loaded hopper cars pickup and delivery to the mine.

Scott Mine had been closed for a number of years when the aerial photo was taken, as evidenced by the pattern of “potholes” where the old mine workings had caved in. Scott Siding eventually became the Nelson Industrial Spur and Parkway West now passes over the former tipple location. Remnants of the coal seam are visible behind the Lowe’s Store.

The coal reserves remaining after the Scott mine was abandoned were eventually mined by the Pittsburgh Coal Company’s Moon Run Mine located in Moon Run village near the I-79/PA-60 interchange.

In 1960, the old Scott mine siding was resurrected as the Nelson Industries Spur and was in service until 1974 with McKesson-Robson and Wickes Furniture receiving cars on the siding.

**This Google Earth view shows the location of Scott mine as it looks today**

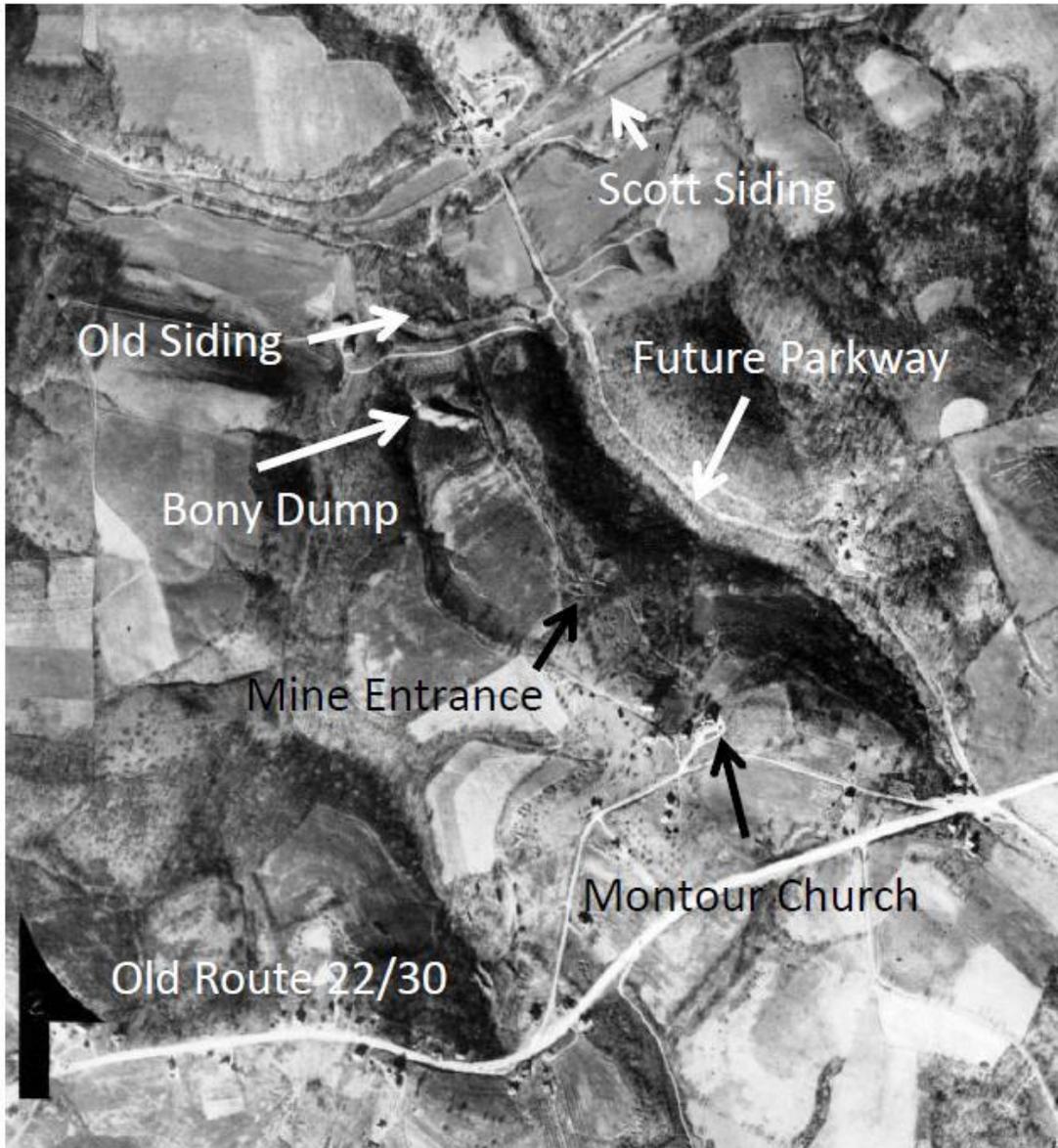


In 1957, with the Penn-Lincoln Parkway under construction, the former mine site looked like this



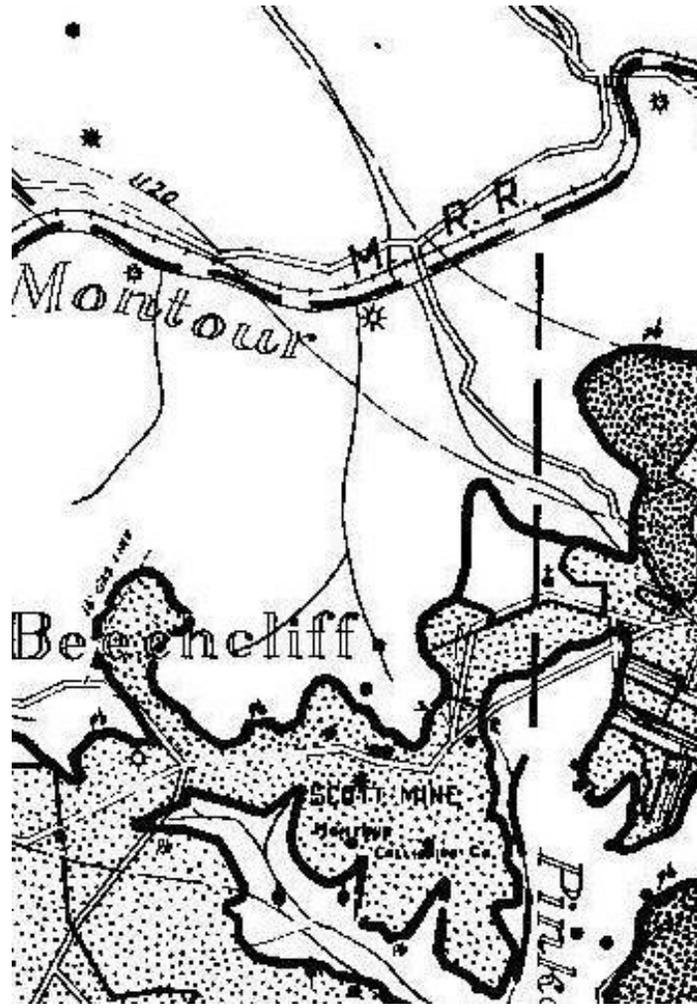
(Aerial photograph courtesy of Penn Pilot)

A 1938 aerial photograph shows the mine not long after it was abandoned

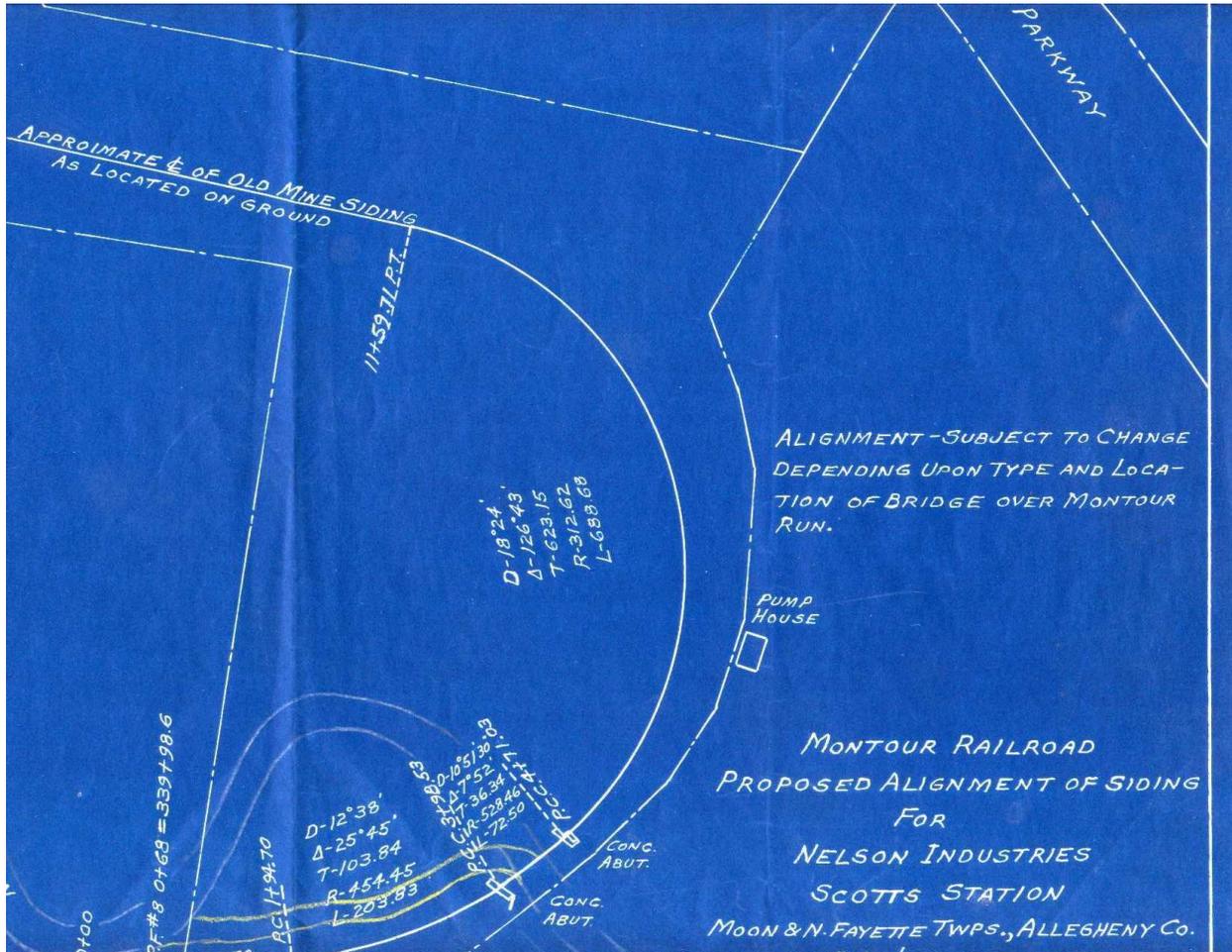


(Aerial photograph courtesy of Penn Pilot)

A 1930s era WPA map shows the western mine entries for Scott mine.



When the Montour built the new Nelson Industries Siding they had the PRR review the proposed layout



(Blueprint courtesy of Gene P. Schaeffer)

This Google Earth image shows the location of the mine entries today

