

**ON THE 4TH TIER ON GOLD HILL OPPOSITE NO. 5 BONANZA YUKON TERRITORY AROUND 1898**

These six clean shaven miners aided by candlelight, use steam points and pick axes to thaw the frozen ground in a deep underground horizontal drift at the height of the Yukon gold rush. A box for hauling the dirt to the surface and a rope ladder are visible directly behind the man with the gold pan. The man in the centre foreground proudly displays a couple of choice nuggets in his pan.

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ON 4<sup>th</sup> TIER, GOLD HILL, OPPO No 5 BONANZA,



**UNDERGROUND 27 ELDORADO**

These twelve miners together with 2 young boys, aided by candlelight, pose in an underground horizontal drift at the height of the Yukon gold rush. Number 27 Eldorado was owned by Alexander McDonald, one of the most prosperous miners in the Yukon, who owned outright or had interests in numbers 14, 19, 22, 30, 34, 35 and 36 on Eldorado Creek. One of McDonald's first claims on Eldorado Creek yielded over 300 ounces a day by panning.

The shaft to bedrock didn't have to be cribbed because the frozen sides stayed as hard a granite year round. The miners worked by candlelight with steel hoses that brought down heated water from above to assist in the thawing of the permafrost cavity. The men

worked by candlelight with picks and shovels during the winter months. The chunks of pay-streak were placed in buckets and hauled to the surface by a windlass where it was stock piled for sluicing during the long days of summer. The gold nuggets were separated from the pay dirt during the 18 plus hours of daylight in June, July and August. The best pay-streak was usually near the bedrock at the bottom of the shaft. Permafrost, seen here on the ceiling, kept the workplace like the inside of an ice locker.

The two boys were not in the mine shaft for the sake of the photographer. They worked the tiny crevices chasing after the nuggets in the dark, the cold and in the stale air.

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W&S UNDERGROUND, 27 ELDORADO.

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