

NIOBIUM

By J. W. McCammon

VIRGIL PROPERTY (93N/9W)

The Virgil property (latitude 55° 42.7'; longitude 124° 24.6'), consisting of the Virgil 1 to 6 and 45 surrounding claims, is on the west flank of the Wolverine Range. The main showing is on the Virgil 3 and 4 claims. It is at 1,625 metres elevation, 7 kilometres northeast of Manson Creek settlement. It can be reached by helicopter or on foot by following a rough tractor trail 4.8 kilometres long that leads north from the Omineca Road at a point 1 kilometre east of the bridge over Wolverine Creek. The original discovery was made in July 1971 by Ernie Floyd, of Manson Creek, who located and recorded the six Virgil claims in September of that year.

The showing is on the top of a small hump at the west end of a ridge. Trees are abundant but underbrush is thin. The only bedrock seen was in cuts opened up by bulldozer and in one small bluff.

Interesting niobium assays have been reported on samples taken from the showing. The exposures reveal a syenite-carbonate complex in schists of the Precambrian-Lower Cambrian Wolverine Complex. The general geological setting appears to be the same as that at the Lonnie property (*Minister of Mines, B.C., Ann. Rept., 1955, p. 30*) which is 4 kilometres to the southeast.

The present workings consist of two main northwest-trending cuts about 90 metres apart. A heliport has been established 30 metres east of the centre of the west cut.

Rocks of the syenite-carbonate complex are exposed in the southern two-thirds of the east cut, at the heliport, along most of the west cut except at the southeast end, and in the upper part of the west limb of the west cut. Schist can be seen in the lower part of the west limb of the west cut, in the southeast end of the west cut, in a bluff 30 metres southeast of the heliport, and in float at the northwest end of the east cut. Foliation in the rocks strikes north 20 to 45 degrees west and dips about 55 degrees southwest. The outcrop distribution and rock attitudes suggest the presence of a band of the complex about 50 metres wide on the west separated by 40 metres of schist from a second band of complex at least 20 metres wide on the east. The exposed length along strike of the west band is at least 250 metres and of the east band, about 60 metres.