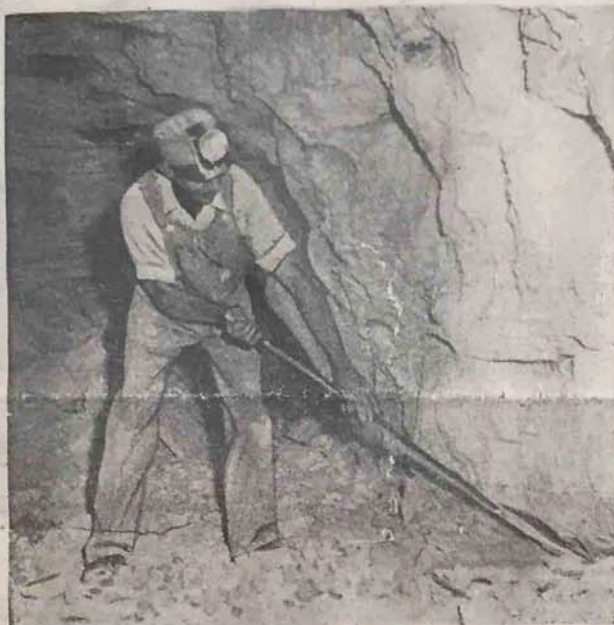
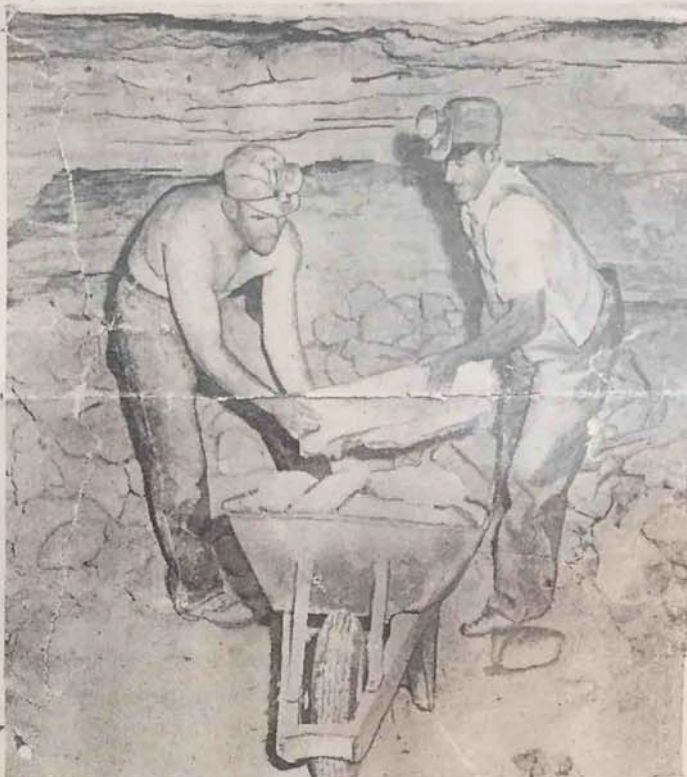


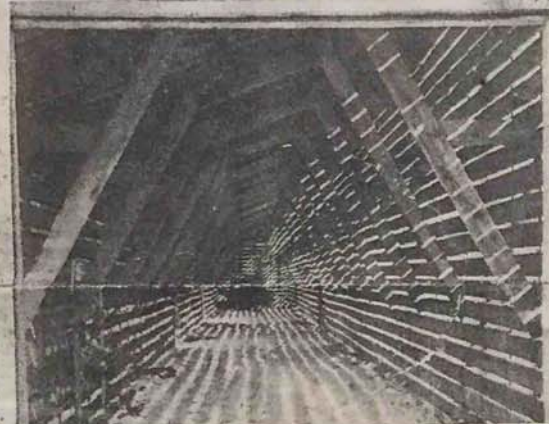
# Nebraska Has Its Miners, Too!



Bud Beebe cuts under the chalk at the top of the silica vein before he inserts the dynamite charge.



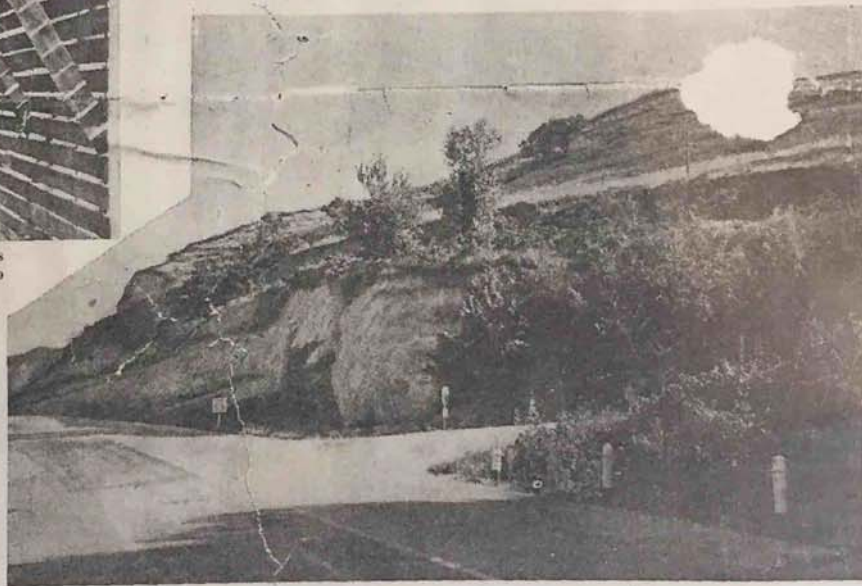
Charles Rother, manager of the chalk mine near Scotia, Neb., at left, helps Bud Beebe, North Loup, load the rubber-tired wheelbarrow.



The ventilated drying shed . . . here the chalk is hauled from the mine and left to dry for about two weeks.



Chalk is enduring . . . these two business houses in Scotia were built of chalk more than 50 years ago.



The chalk hill at the right of the highway . . . just like any other hill until after you enter one of the shafts.

By Jack Bailey

(The World-Herald's News Service.)  
ARE you ready for the jackpot question? Well, here it is. Is there a chalk mine in Nebraska, and if so, where is it located?

Nine out of 10 Nebraskans will answer no to the question, despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of Nebraskans have passed by the only such mine in the state during the past 50 years. The mine is located two miles east of Scotia on the main highway between Grand Island and Ord, has yielded thousands of carloads of chalk to be shipped to Omaha for processing.

Owned by the United Mineral Products company of Omaha, the mine has been in charge of Charles Rother, who lives at the mine site, the past three years.

What do they use chalk for, other than in schoolrooms, you ask? For 72 other purposes, to be explicit. It is used in cattle feed, in chicken feed replacing

the oyster shell, in fertilizer, for road beds, in bentonite. From chalk comes a polish for cleaning silverware, rings, brass, and all kinds of cooking utensils.

For Ripping, Too

IT HAS been used quite successfully as riprap along the banks of rivers in flood areas. And it makes substantial buildings that last indefinitely. Several farm homes in the Scotia vicinity are of chalk and two Scotia business buildings have withstood the ravages of time for more than 50 years.

Geologists say that only two hills in the Scotia area contain chalk. To date only one of them has been worked. From this hill, tallest in Greeley county, three towns can be seen—Scotia, North Loup and Cotesfield.

The chalk deposit is between six and seven feet thick and starts at least two hundred feet from the top of the hill. The vein runs

horizontally through the hill, between a soapy sand formation and thick layer of hard silica.

To mine the chalk, the men cut back at the top of the silica, dynamite between the silica and soapy sand. The chalk gives way while the silica is not loosened.

Large chunks of chalk, weighing 50 to 75 pounds, are loaded into a specially built truck and hauled to a ventilated drying shed for a week or two before shipped by railroad to Omaha for processing.

## Main Shafts

TWO main entrances permit access to the mine, and there are three main shafts, each at least three hundred feet long. Sub-sidiary tunnels branch in all directions from the main shafts.

Dimensions of shafts and tunnels—six and one-half by 14 feet—permit passage of the specially-built truck anywhere in the mine.

Shafts and tunnels are braced at intervals to offer additional safety to the miners.

The temperature in the mine makes it an attractive place to work. In the summer the thermometer averages 55 degrees; in winter, the mercury never drops below 20 no matter what the outside weather.

On the hottest day last summer—107, in the shade—Rother and his assistant, Bud Beebe of North Loup, worked in comfort of 54 degrees.

But Rother says, mining chalk is no snap. And he ought to know; he's a wrestler on the side.

"You get plenty of exercise, mining chalk," he says. "I'll guarantee it will keep you in condition. At least, it keeps me in A-1 condition for wrestling."

Only two men are working the mine now—and Rother says he would like four or five more if he could find them. The two of them

put out a carload of chalk every two weeks.

It isn't a big industry, Rother points out, but has been a continuous one. Someone has been working at the Scotia mine every day for 50 years.

## Poetic License

The starry-eyed poet button-holed the millionaire.

"Mr. Doakes," he said, "I want to wed your daughter."

The old man almost hit the ceiling.

"What?" he howled. "Do you realize that my daughter just inherited one million dollars—while you haven't a cent to your name?"

The poet nodded.

"I understand all that, sir," he replied dreamily. "But I figured the million would tide us over until I sold one of my poems!"