

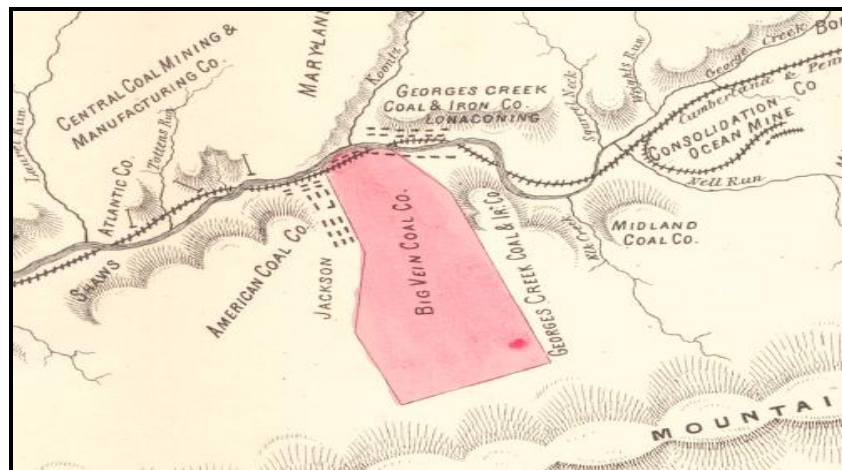
The Evergreen Coal Trail

Coal Mining At Evergreen

In 1870, Joseph Arnold Trimble, whose grandfather had settled on the Eckhart side of Federal Hill in the 1780s, lived with his family and brother Enoch on a 686 acre farm. In addition to his own farm, Joseph Arnold had also recently acquired (in 1869) an adjacent 181 acre property from his Federal Hill neighbors, the Winter family. This property, which had originally been settled circa 1780 by the Grimes family, would later become known as “Evergreen” for the fledgling evergreen trees planted there by Joseph Arnold’s son Winfield. Coal began to influence the lives of the Trimble family beginning in 1873, when Joseph Arnold and brother Enoch executed an agreement to allow their brother Noah to mine coal on their property for a share of the profits. Noah was to absorb all costs. There is no record that Noah was successful in his endeavor, nor were his heirs successful in establishing a mining claim after Noah’s death.

Despite this early lack of success in mining, due to the various fruitful mining operations in the nearby Georges Creek Valley (which produced over 60 million tons of coal between 1854 and 1891), when Joseph Arnold Trimble died in 1897, both his surface acreage and his mineral rights were specified and deeded to his children. The surface was divided into five parts and conveyed by auction to the highest sibling bidder. The mineral rights were divided into shares and distributed to the sibling heirs. Some of the heirs subsequently sold their interests. The Evergreen property, both the surface and mineral rights, remained under the ownership of oldest son Winfield, who had purchased them from his father in 1882.

Since 1897, there have been numerous coal leases that have been executed with various coal companies, for both deep and strip mining on Trimble properties. From 1902 through 1912, the Midland Mining Company, owned by the Somerville family, deep-mined Trimble coal, as did Clinton Brotemarkle in 1903 and the Mount Union Mining Company in 1914. As of 1907, according to the Maryland Geological Survey, Midland Mining employed 16 men who mined coal from a seam about four feet thick. At that time, according to the records of the Survey, “mules hauled the coal over a tram-way from the main opening to the head of a gravity plane, 1300 feet long, which delivers it to the tippie”. Hundreds of tons of coal (over 7000 per year in 1910 and 1911) were hauled over that tram-way.



Western Maryland Coal Mining Map

In addition to those early mining operations, one of the longest running and most frequently renewed Trimble coal leases in the early 1900s was with United Big Vein Coal (UBVC) under the direction of the Rowe brothers. Leases with UBVC were executed in 1915, 1917, 1919, 1921, and 1924. The Mount Savage Mining Company, represented by Benjamin Biays also obtained two leases during this period, one in 1918 extending to another in 1925 during which lease period the company defaulted. Two other coal leases were executed during this World War I era (both in 1919). One was with the Mount Savage George's Creek Coal Company and the other was with Michael Bishields, a Slabtown neighbor of the Trimbles. Both of these leases were for the coal seam at the top of what was at that time the incline (gravity) plane (mentioned above) on the tramway that had been built on the Evergreen property to haul coal out of the deep mines.

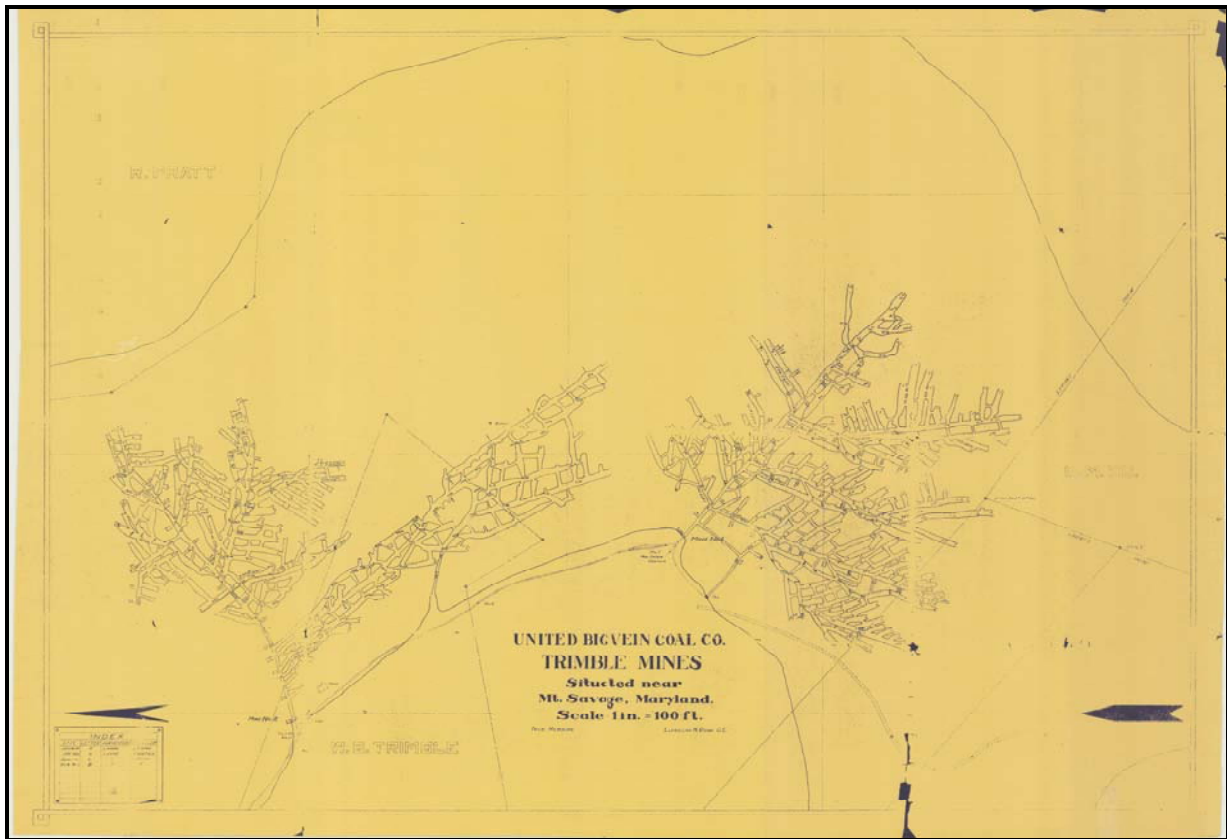


Mount Union Coal Mining at Evergreen

Other deep mining continued at Evergreen in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1932, a lease was executed with the Mount Union Mining Company and directed by Michael Bishields, who was by that time father-in-law of the latest owner of Evergreen, Winfield's son Victor. Three other leases were also executed, all in 1937, one with Victor, one with his cousin Jesse Trimble, and one with Michael Bishields. Various small operations scattered throughout the property were also contracted in the 1940s: one in 1942 by Ben Mellon which was renewed in 1947 and extended to 1950; one by Earl Michaels in 1945 and 1946; one by J.W. Ford in 1946 via Ford Coal Company; and one by Earl Hughes in 1947.

Federal Hill Coal

The "Big Vein" refers to a 14 foot thick seam of bituminous coal (known for its clean-burning low sulfur content) that was discovered in the early 1800s in the Georges Creek Valley. The Trimble mines are at the extreme eastern point of the Big Vein at the edge of the coal stratum (according to the records kept by J.W. Stevens, one of the mine foremen who worked there in the early 1900s). The tram road provided access to that Big Vein outcrop (also known as the Pittsburgh seam). Approximately 20 feet below the Big Vein was the lower Pittsburg split seam, also known as the Morantown seam. This seam was not thick enough to be deep mined and was only accessed by strip mining decades later.



Map of the Trimble Mines

Other coal seams on Federal Hill include: 1) a small section of the Tyson seam, located at the top of Federal Hill in an area known as Charlotte (Trimble's) Fancy, which was not of good quality; 2) the Redstone seam, located 30 to 40 feet above the Big Vein and below the Tyson seam, which was mined by Victor Trimble and accessed via a mine opening near the gate to the neighboring Bishield's property; and 3) the Franklin seam, located in the middle of the Evergreen pear orchard, which was never mined. Although the majority of the tram road and all but one of the mine openings that provided access to Trimble coal were on the Evergreen (Winfield's) property, the coal itself was on his father Joseph Arnold Trimble's adjacent 686 acre farm.

The Tram Road

Before UBVC (the Rowe brothers) began its World War I era mining efforts on Federal Hill, in addition to leasing the mineral rights, the company needed to lease the right to access the surface and obtain ingress and egress. UBVC also needed to build or acquire living quarters for its miners and have the means to haul coal to the Cumberland and Pennsylvania (C&P) Railroad, trucks, or horse drawn vehicles.

For ingress and egress to the mines, UBVC executed a lease with Joseph Arnold Trimble's son Winfield, which gave UBVC the right to transport the coal on rails from the mines to the railroad. To remove the coal from the site, the Rowe brothers expanded the tram-way established by Midland Mining Company several years earlier and added a bull wheel to the incline plane that could efficiently lower the coal 1300 feet from Winfield's property to the C&P Railroad. This mechanism also included the necessary rails and switches to traverse the route between the railroad and deep into the mines.



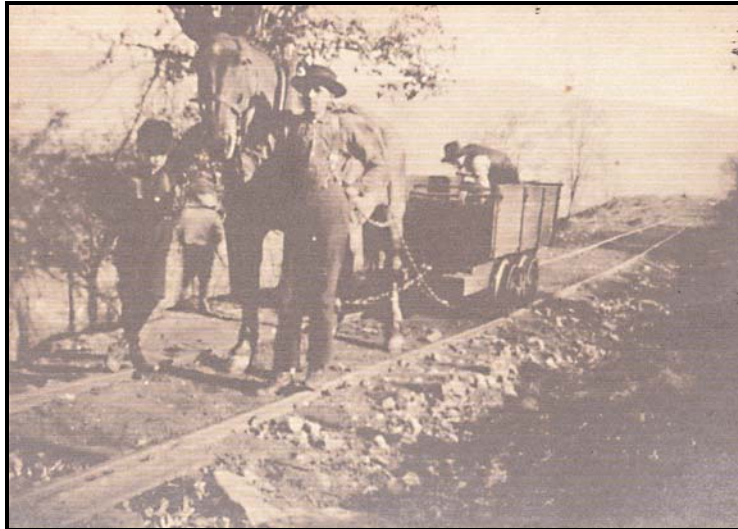
The Evergreen Tram Road

In 1921, to create living quarters for the miners, the Rowe brothers again turned to Winfield. They purchased a 9.2 acre lot of Evergreen surface to create “Roweville”. Miner’s houses were constructed there and leased by the Rowe brothers to the miners. A reservoir dam was also built in order to create a water supply.

The newly upgraded tram road now connected three mine openings along its route:

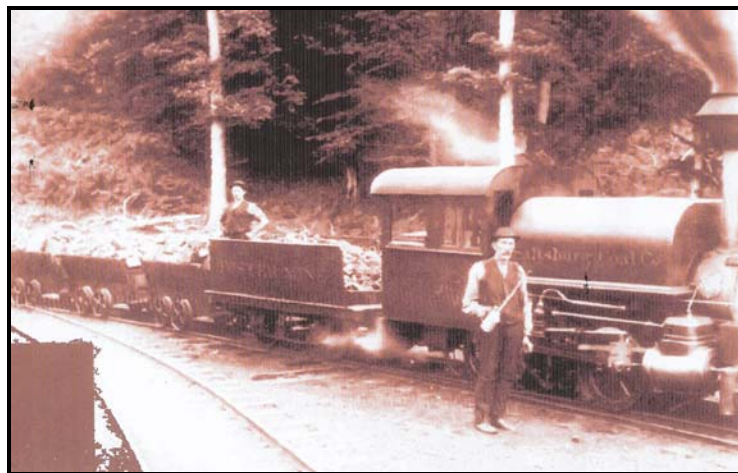
- UBVC Mine #1 (located at the beginning of the tram road, on the parcel of Joseph Arnold Trimble’s farm that was home to Winfield’s brother George Trimble - now owned by the Bishield’s family);
- UBVC Mine #2 (roughly halfway along the 8/10ths of mile long road near the miner’s mule stable)
- UBVC Mine #3 (located where the incline plane begins to descend down the steep hill, ending below the village of Slabtown).

The road passed within 50 feet of the Winfield’s Evergreen farmhouse as it transversed the property from the mines to the incline plane. Once the coal reached the incline plane, the huge bull wheel with heavy steel cables used gravity to lower full cars down the incline and pull empty cars back up the hill. As the coal was transported, men removed pieces of slate. A huge bin with a lever was used to measure the amount of coal disbursed.



Transporting Coal Using Horse Drawn Coal Cars

Several methods of transportation were used on the tram road during its years of operation, beginning with mules, ponies and horses; then an electric tram engine powered by electricity installed for the mines; and finally a dinky steam engine powered by coal from the mines and well water stored in a tall circular storage tank. Remains of the storage tank and a building and platform used to service the engine can be found today behind the current Caretaker's House.



Transporting Coal Using a Dinky Engine

Mining operations also included a blacksmith shop (which contained a pile of sand used as ballast for the ties that held the rails), a forge with chimney, a mule stable (which had a storage area for hay and grain), and a duplex miners' house. Remnants of these artifacts are located by the tram road near the barn. Several coal cars were also used, but none remain. In some areas of the coal haul tram road, there was a double track and switching from one track to another.



Remains of Miners' Mule Stable

When UBVC went bankrupt in the 1920s, this construction was never properly dismantled. As time passed during the 1930s and 1940s, pieces of the tram road disappeared in “midnight raids” (e.g. all of the rails that were outside the mines). Even the dinky engine disappeared, as well as all of the coal cars and the bull wheel. Roweville (now known as Rolleville) was sold for payment of unpaid real estate taxes.

The Evergreen Coal Trail

That Evergreen Coal Trail follows the path of the historic tram road as it transported coal from the deep mines over one hundred years ago to the incline plane and the railway below. The Trail also takes hikers past the remains of the miner's mule stable, the blacksmith's forge, the dinky service platform and water tower, and the tipple where the coal was dumped. Visitors can also see other points of interest at the Evergreen Heritage Center including the Barn, the orchards, the location of the old slave graveyard and the grove of thirteen varieties of evergreen trees that were planted in the 1870s by the Winfield Trimble. The Trail includes twenty-two points of interest and spans about 8/10ths of a mile.



Walking the Evergreen Coal Trail