



STATE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY
AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

BAKER FIELD OFFICE
2033 FIRST STREET
BAKER, OREGON

March 19, 1951

Mr. David White
State Department of Geology
And Mineral Industries
702 Woodlark Building
Portland 5, Oregon

Dear Dave:

The most noted occurrence of scheelite in eastern Oregon is that in the Cliff mine which is located in the Virtue District, T. 8 S., R. 41 E., section 32, Baker County.

The Cliff is primarily a gold mine, and was originally operated as such. Beyond this the early history of the property is but sketchily known as is the case with so many of eastern Oregon's older operations. Nothing is known about the tungsten potentialities other than that scheelite has been identified as an accessory mineral, and that an unsuccessful attempt to exploit this scheelite was made during the first World War.

Why the attempted operation of World War I vintage proved fruitless is likewise an unknown quantity as none of the subsequently written handbook reports about this property state anything of significance regarding the conduct of this attempted operation, or about the geologic conditions that were revealed by the work then done. The property has been inactive ever since excepting for a limited amount of mining done on a lease basis by a Mr. Kenneth Grabner of Ironside, Oregon. Grabner's work was done in the late 30's. It presumably consisted of the mining of pillars and remnants rather than the mining of newly developed ore, and no new data relative to the scheelite situation was ever recorded as a result of this operation insofar as is known. Whether the failure of the attempted World War I operations was due to the lack of scheelite in sufficient quantity to warrant mining, or to other causes, is a factor that remains problematical. Such consideration as may justly be given to the property as a potential tungsten mine, hinges therefore solely on the fact that scheelite has been established as an accessory mineral the potential value of which has never been appraised according to all available records. Otherwise its association with a relatively strong and substantial gold quartz vein such as the Cliff vein reportedly is, commands attention. Whether or not the occurrence will justify the gamble of reopening for appraisal purposes will depend largely in the condition of the workings and the cost of rendering them safely accessible. In this connection I am confident that the workings are at present quite inaccessible and as to how much of a job it would be to reopen them I can't predict. It is my understanding, however, that they are

pretty well gutted above the 200 level so that for significant inspection the shaft will necessarily have to be restored to at least that depth.

Published reports on the Cliff mine are as follows: Lindgren, 22nd Annual Report of the U.S.G.S, 1901, Volume II, page 725; Parks and Swartley, Volume II, number 4 of the Mineral Resources of Oregon, published by the Oregon Bureau of Mines and Geology, 1916, page 56; Gilluly, Reed and Park, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 846-A, 1933, page 77; Gilluly, U.S.G.S. Bulletin 879, 1937, page 98; Quine, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Bulletin, 14-A, 1939, page 104.

The Cliff is currently owned by Alma Williams, 2458 N. Maxson Road, El Monte California, and J. T. Taylor, 2149 5th Street, Bremerton, Washington, according to information reported to this department by Mr. Taylor.

There is a surface showing of scheelite in the Rock Creek District, T. 6 S., R. 38 E., section 31, Baker County. This was examined by Les. Richards and is written up in a file report under the name DAVIS TUNGSTEN DEPOSIT, the report being by Richards, July 21, 1942. I visited this occurrence once but made no report as at the time of my visit no new development work had been done and I saw nothing which merited any attempt to add to the property description as already given by Richards. The scheelite showing is so restricted in size, and so weak, that in my estimation it would be misleading to spot it as an occurrence on any map unless it and comparable occurrences are in some manner qualified as being of little or no apparent economic import. The way it stands, this occurrence has been the object of interest to various local groups, but in all instances they have abandoned the property as unworthy of attention after making their initial examinations. To the best of my knowledge no work in the form of new pits or excavations has been done here since those that Richards examined we dug, nor does the occurrence appear to merit such work as natural outcrops are sufficiently abundant to permit the making of a reasonably conclusive evaluation as it is.

The Chicken Creek area in the Lower Burnt River District, T. 12 S., R. 44 E., Baker County, has been often mentioned locally as an area in which scheelite showings have been identified. The area is in general one in which a rather considerable amount of underground mining has been done for free gold occurring in seams of sometimes knife-edge proportions. The country rock is mostly a decomposed granitic. Needless to say, most of these operations have been one and two man affairs, but a Mr. Lovejoy operated in the area with apparent success for a period of many years up until his death a few years ago. The tonnage of ore milled by Lovejoy and the others is undoubtedly small in comparison with the size of their workings, but the stringers were reportedly exceedingly rich. The bulk of the workings in the area are inaccessible. The surface of the ground has been placered over large areas for its semi-residual gold content. This was done many years ago, and needless to say, the ground surface today does not lend itself readily to direct inspection of a significant sort. I have been over various parts of the area several times, but have never seen any specific occurrence of either gold or tungsten that warranted write-up even in note form. Like

the Rock Creek occurrence, this Chicken Creek District tungsten was the object of interest to various local individuals at one time or another during the last war, but in ^{no} instance did any of them do any tangible digging that I know of. Rather to the contrary, most of them lost interest in short order after their initial visits to the area. The result is that I never had an opportunity to follow through with the making of any first hand examination of any freshly excavated showing.

It would be my inclination to rate the Chicken Creek tungsten as feeble to the point of being unworthy of further consideration were it not for a file report by Robert N. Bell, State Mine Inspector, Idaho. How authentic this report is I don't know. I merely made a copy from a copy which Mr. Arnreiter provided, Arnreiter being an individual who aspired to setting up an operation on the Chicken Creek Gold Mine some years ago, but never did. I am enclosing a copy of this Bell report for your information. As you can see, its title page carries the notation that the report represents excerpts from a report covering various other mineral occurrences in eastern Oregon and western Idaho, though neither the title, nor source, nor date of the original report is given. It might be worthwhile to spend some effort in trying to run down the full original Bell report as judging from his remarks, Bell's examination was made at a time when the area was freshly placered and various workings were open for inspection and sampling, and his reported sample results are quite attractively high. The way it stands I have not the remotest notion as to which of the many now grown over workings in the area might be the ones he refers to in his report, nor do I know of anyone who does. This I have already tried to run down years back, but with no success.

The three occurrences just discussed are the only ones I know of in eastern Oregon other than those described in Dogami Bulletin No. 12. I have never had occasion to reexamine any of these ^{Dogami} occurrences, nor have I ever heard of anyone doing any tangible development work on anyone of them. Since I cannot add anything to the already existent reports relative to these occurrences, the best I can do is to refer you directly to Dogami No. 12 itself. The occurrences are already spotted on the Dogami No. 12 map — that is, such as they are. From their descriptions most of them seem like pretty weak sister things to feature as prospects.

Trusting this will serve to meet your problems, I remain,

Sincerely,

N. S. Wagner

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NSW:mb

Enc: Robert Bell Report