

QUICKSILVER CONSOLIDATED MINING CO.

The mine of the Quicksilver Consolidated Mining Co. is in sec. 29, T. 14 S., R. 20 E., on the north slope of Lookout Mountain about 2 miles from the Johnson Creek road and about 30 miles from Prineville by the Ochoco Highway. The mine was under the management of C. W. Washburne at the time of visit.

The property, formerly known as the American Almaden, has been exploited intermittently for many years, but the total production, according to Mr. Washburn, probably does not exceed 50 flasks. Three flasks were produced in 1906 and small amounts in 1908, 1915, 1929, and 1930. There is a rather elaborate retort on the property.

The mine is developed by two tunnels. Several other surface workings are caved. At the time of visit work was confined to the lower level. This level contains about 1,500 feet of drifts, one raise to the upper level for ventilation, and several minor raises. Some stoping has been done in three places. (See fig. 20.) The ground is very heavy, and most of the work is completely lagged. Square sets are used in the stopes.

The country rock is Tertiary (?) basalt, cut by some diabase dikes. The deposit consists of a network of veins in the shattered basalt. The veins can hardly be described as having any definite course; they are commonly small, branching, irregular stringers and seams. Locally the stringers tend to follow stronger controlling fissures and send out branches from these in all directions. One vein that had been worked just prior to the visit strikes N. 45° W. and stands vertical. This vein or lode is apparently controlled by a shear surface and ranges in width from 3 inches to about 1 foot. Many narrower stringers branch from it into the northeast wall, but the southwest wall, in the exposed workings, seems to be less mineralized. These stringers range in thickness from a knife-edge to about half an inch, but most are less than one eighth inch thick.

The basalt, where cut by these fissures, is intensely altered to clay

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(chiefly ferriferrous montmorillonite), with a little chlorite developed along stringers. These chloritic stringers are cut by the cinnabar-bearing fissures, which are locally crustified with opal, chalcedony, quartz, dolomite, a little calcite, and some asphalt accompanying the cinnabar. Pyrite has impregnated the zone of clay alteration and appears to be older than the cinnabar-bearing stringers. The sequence of mineralization appears to be first clay, chlorite, and pyrite followed in order by quartz, cinnabar, quartz and dolomite, chalcedony and opal, and lastly, asphalt.

Considerable stoping has been done near the end of the northeast drift, a stope there in gougy basalt being about 40 feet high and 15 to 20 feet wide. A little cinnabar remains in the clay of the walls. Several other stopes have been worked; one, near the junction of the southwest branch with the main drift, is about 50 feet long and follows a vein that strikes N. 60° E. and dips steeply south. This stope extends to the upper level. Much of the old work in the mine is caved, so that the extent of other stoping was not determined.

The tenor of the ore is unknown, but to judge from the material exposed in the mine it must be rather low. It would be difficult to select any considerable tonnage carrying more than one half of 1 per cent of quicksilver; probably even this limit would be hard to maintain.

(quoted from U.S.G.S. Bull. 846-A, pp. 121-123)