

# State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

702 Woodlark Building  
Portland, Oregon

Visited by Ewart M. Baldwin  
May 10th and 19th

PARROTT OIL "SEEP"

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Location: 3220 SW McChesney Road. (Just behind West Slope) Mr. Parrott lives to the right of the road, his place is surrounded by a white picket fence.

HISTORY  
Mr. Parrot dug a ditch about 12-14" deep to drain a sloping swampy area in his yard. Leaves fell in during the fall and in the spring when he cleaned out the ditch an oily scum was present on both the leaves and the water. The oily substance was dark and looked like oil. There was an iridescence on the mud and water. There was also a distinct smell, pronounced by several to be of petroleum derivation.

He built the house in 1938, and as far as he knows no contamination has ever occurred. A small house behind his is occupied by one person, both houses are up the slope. Mr. Parrott does use fuel oil and the tank is about 80 feet, partly upslope but mostly to the northwest. He doesn't believe that he is losing any of his fuel, however, that is a possibility.

Geological notes: The entire west slope in the vicinity of Mr. Parrot's place is underlain by Boring lava (Treasher 1942). This is in turn overlain by silt that may be as much as 100 feet thick or more. He stated that no basalt cropped out on or near his 2½-acre plot. The upper part of the silt is mixed with humus and supports some vegetation. If this were a true oil seep, it would be coming up through Boring and silt. As Mr. Parrot's place is well down the slope, he is a considerable distance from the apex of

the structure as indicated by the lava. This may not be indicative of underlying sedimentary strata that supposedly exist beneath the Boring and the Columbia River.

Opinion: There was no obvious source of contamination unless it were possible that the fuel oil were leaking. Mr. Parrott states that to his knowledge there is no contamination.

1. It may have been spilled when the house was under construction or at some later date, unknown to the owner. However, there was a strong smell to the substance of oil which shows that the volatiles were still present and should indicate recency of emplacement, whether artificial or natural.
2. The fuel oil may be leaking, although there would be a considerable lateral vector in the down slope movement. The top of the "seep" seemed to be nearly as high as the tank.
3. Two <sup>seeps</sup> tanks contribute to the general seepage. It seems altogether likely that some oil may have come through contamination from this source.
4. Lastly, it might be a true seep but this does not seem likely.

EMB 5/24/45