

State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

1069 State Office Building
Portland 1, Oregon

REPORTED OIL SEEP, TUALATIN AREA

Washington County

Location: The reported seep was located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 26, T. 2 S., R. 1 W., Washington County, about 2 miles south of the town of Tualatin.

Property owner: Fred Straw, Rural Route #2, Box 127-A, Sherwood, Oregon.

Discussion: Mr. Straw came into the office for the first time on March 16, 1959, to report some oil seepage in several shallow pits he had dug on his property. Arrangements were made for an inspection of the pit sometime after a heavy rain when the seepage would be carried by groundwater.

Mr. Straw again visited the office on April 2, 1959, bringing three water samples from the pits on his place. There had been a great deal of rain during the week preceding his visit. The samples were examined but no trace of oil could be found. Reddish color of the water was due to colloidal clay.

Mr. Straw and I drove to his property near the town of Tualatin as he said there was still some oil showing on the water in the pit and a scum of grease on the pit walls. The pits were inspected and the iridescent spots floating on the water surface proved to be iron oxide. The greasy (slimy) white material on the walls of the pit was some sort of scum brought in with the groundwater but was not a hydrocarbon.

Geology: Soils are red lateritic clay in the vicinity of Fred Straw's place and angular basalt cobbles are plentiful, indicating that rock is not too far below the surface.

The report by Newcomb and Hart on the Tualatin Valley shows Columbia River basalt underlying recent sediments at a depth from 150 feet to less than 100 feet near Straw's property.

Conclusions: Iron oxide was mistaken for oil shows in the pits dug
on Fred Straw's property.

Report by: V. C. Newton

April 3, 1959