

2. J. C. Rudge's barite prospect

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Following an inquiry by J. C. Rudge a visit was made to his lease 46M/68 and various barite prospects were examined on the lease and in the immediate vicinity.

The lease is located about one mile SW of the Franklin River at a distance of three miles due S from the Devonport-Exeter highway. Access is gained by lorry or four-wheel drive vehicle from Smith's Rubicon River farm (fig. 6).

The area is one of low hills with intervening marshes. Vegetation consists of medium-sized eucalypts and light scrub.

The physiography is controlled by the regional strike of the rocks, faulting and a flat pre-Permian surface which is exposed in a weathered condition with occasional remnants of Permian basal conglomerate and sandstone resting on it.

Rocks in the area are mainly slates with a few quartzites and minor dolerite intrusions. The rock in which barite occurs is a hornfels.

Barite was noted in the three costeans and shafts shown on the sketch map. The most promising of these had been cleaned out by Mr Rudge. It consists of a costean 75 ft long and 4 ft wide driven across the strike of the barite mineralisation and a shaft about 15 ft deep from the floor of the costean. Barite occurs as pockets at fracture intersections and as selvages on fracture surfaces but has no preferred orientation. Traces can be followed for about 400 ft on the surface in a northerly direction from the shaft. The top of this shaft measures 13 x 10 ft and barite traces are present on the costean walls over this area.

At the south-eastern workings narrow barite veins have been trenched for over 100 ft in a south-easterly direction from a shaft some 15 ft deep. The northern workings outside this lease consist of a 100-foot costean 6-8 ft wide and 6-10 ft deep with a 10-foot shaft at the eastern end. A small showing of barite is present in the shaft and appears to have been followed in a northerly direction. The mode of occurrence of barite is the same in the three exposures.

The rock carrying the barite is extremely hard, dense and siliceous and has been described by Petrologist, G. Everard (p. 135). A leached and weathered variety of this rock occurs with the unweathered rock. No bedding or other structural features are in evidence and the presence of breccia suggests that the mineralisation is in a fault-breccia zone, possibly 2000 ft in width bounded by Tertiary faults.

Exposures were insufficient to indicate what percentage barite to country rock is present and no suggestions as to the best area to prospect can be made with justification. Much more surface prospecting must be done in the area before the economic feasibility of mining this barite can be determined.

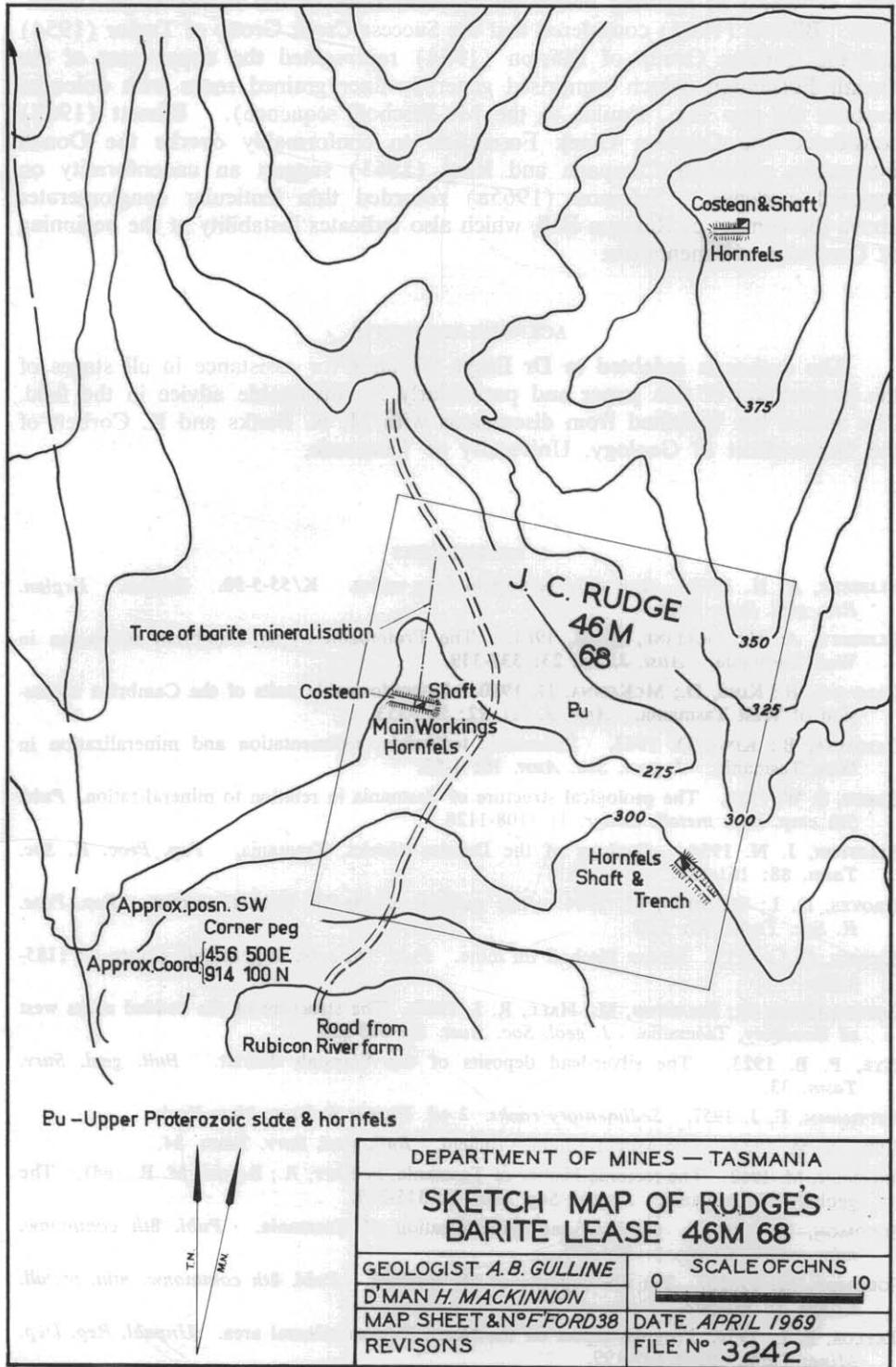


FIGURE 6