

CHROMITE

Chromite is widespread in the ultrabasic rocks of this State. It occurs as disseminated grains or, rarely, as veinlets, but nowhere is concentration sufficient for profitable mining.

The creeks and rivers flowing through these rocks have naturally concentrated the heavy minerals, including chromite. These alluvial deposits have been mined for precious minerals, mainly osmiridium, and the chromite has been discarded.

Owing to the relatively low price of chromite, it would be necessary to treat alluvial deposits on a large scale, and where costs of transport are relatively low. Very few of the localities visited satisfy these conditions. At Hamilton on Forth the belt of ultrabasic rock is a very thin one and stretches north-west towards Ulverstone. The narrowness of this belt would militate against a concentration of much chromite in the alluvial flats around Hamilton. These flats form rich agricultural land and so the chromite content of this ground has not been determined. There appears to be little justification to form a scheme of testing this ground.

The alluvial flats on the Castra River should contain a large amount of chromite, but no systematic testing has been carried out. The remoteness of this area would so increase transportation costs that it is doubtful whether the deposits could be worked even if they were exceedingly rich.

The creeks at Mt. Stewart, Heazlewood, Nineteen Mile and Dundas all contain chromite derived from the ultrabasic rocks, but in no case is there the development of extensive flats that could be worked on a large scale.

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10th November, 1943.