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Investigation of a possible meteor crater, Corinna district

by A.J. Noldart

In approximately mid 1967 a Mr J. Doyle of Sulphur Creek contacted the Department with reference to a suspected meteorite crater in the Corinna district. Mr Doyle considered the 'crater' to be related to a reported meteorite sighting over the NW Coast in 1953. The meteorite was reported to have landed somewhere to the south or south west of the Waratah district, but was never reliably confirmed.

The suspected 'crater' was inspected on 20 February 1968, and a reconnaissance Jolander magnetometer check of the area was carried out.

The 'crater' is located two miles from Corinna (see County of Russell, Rocky River chart) at the position marked as the 2 miles peg from Corinna, and approximately one chain west of the road.

In form the 'crater' is round in shape with a diameter at the surface of approximately 80 feet tapering to a width of approximately 15 feet at the floor. Depth of the 'crater' is approximately 20 feet. During wet periods there would be about 6 feet of water in the bottom, with light vegetation, cutting grass etc. extending up the walls from this depth. The size of timber regrowth suggests a 10 to 15 year period since the 'crater' was formed.

The 'crater' is on the top of a rise from the road, has no outlet such as would be expected if excavated for road gravel, and there is no evidence of it being due to prospecting operations, e.g. no water races, spoil dumps, tail races etc. It does not appear to be man made.

Geologically the 'crater' is excavated into fine gravel and sand cover over probable rocks of the Whyte Schist sequence. There is no outcrop anywhere in the vicinity nor in the 'crater', the walls being hidden by a thick cover of sand and gravel talus.

The magnetometer traverses were inconclusive. Traverses around the 'crater' at surface gave minor variations over a background reading of about 215 gammas. This background in itself is anomalously high but regional checks at ¼ mile intervals north and south along the road gave similar readings and it was assumed that some basic member of the basement rocks was responsible. The direction of the road in this area roughly coincides with the regional strike of the basement rocks and Dr E. Williams suggests that the magnetic effect could be due to one or more members of a possible meta-dolerite dyke swarm known to occur in these rocks.

The origin of the 'crater' is thus not determinable from the present information. A suggestion that it may be a sinkhole can be discounted as there are no known calcareous beds of sufficient width or characteristics to develop features of this size.

Further investigation using the Proton-precession magnetometer for detailed traverses plus cleaning down of part of the 'crater' wall may give further information, but the project is not considered important enough to warrant the time and expenditure unless carried out in conjunction with other work in the district.

[25 March 1968]