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REPORT ON A VISIT TO THE MOUNT STRONACH

MOLYBDENITE SHOWINGS, TASMANIA

MAY 1970

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CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 1.
Location and Access	Page 1.
Title	Page 2.
History	Page 3.
Geology and Mineralization	Page 5.
Conclusions and Recommendations	Page 7.

Introduction

During the week 18th to 20th May, 1970, a visit was made to the Mount Stronach molybdenite showings, near Scottsdale in north-east Tasmania.

The showings consist of a number of molybdenite crystals or rosettes exposed on the surfaces of spalled granitic rocks. In places the mineralisation is fairly impressive visually, and it is evident that it occurs sporadically throughout a large proportion of the granite batholith. However, in none of the locations seen was there any suggestion that an economic concentration of mineralization of any volume existed.

Location and Access

Mount Stronach is a large hill, elongate in a roughly north-south direction $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of the town of Scottsdale in north-east Tasmania. The railway and the main road from Scottsdale to the north-east skirt the southern end of the hill. A farm road leads to a log slipway at the foot of

Page Two

the western slope of the hill and from this point a bulldozed track ascends nearly to the top. The last few hundred feet to the cairn marking the trig point at 1640 feet elevation is made on foot. The track up the hill is negotiable by four-wheel-drive vehicle in dry weather only.

Title

F. C. Bardenhagen of Lilydale holds Special Prospector's Licence No. 74 for 3.5 square miles of land in the Land District of Dorset, Tasmania, in force from 19th January, 1970 to 19th July, 1970.

Within this area, two smaller claim areas have been pegged in the names of Mr. and Mrs. D. Kershaw. The precise location and validity of these claims has not yet been fully spelt out, but Bardenhagen does not intend to dispute them.

Page Three

History /

No detailed investigation into the history of the occurrence was made but it is thought that the only recorded production of molybdenite in Tasmania originated from this vicinity. The amount would have been insignificant. During a brief visit to the Mines Department in Launceston, the following notes were taken from the Tasmanian Department of Mines Technical Report No. 5, 1960, page 73:

"Drilling at Mount Stromach Molybdenite Area" by
T. D. Hughes:

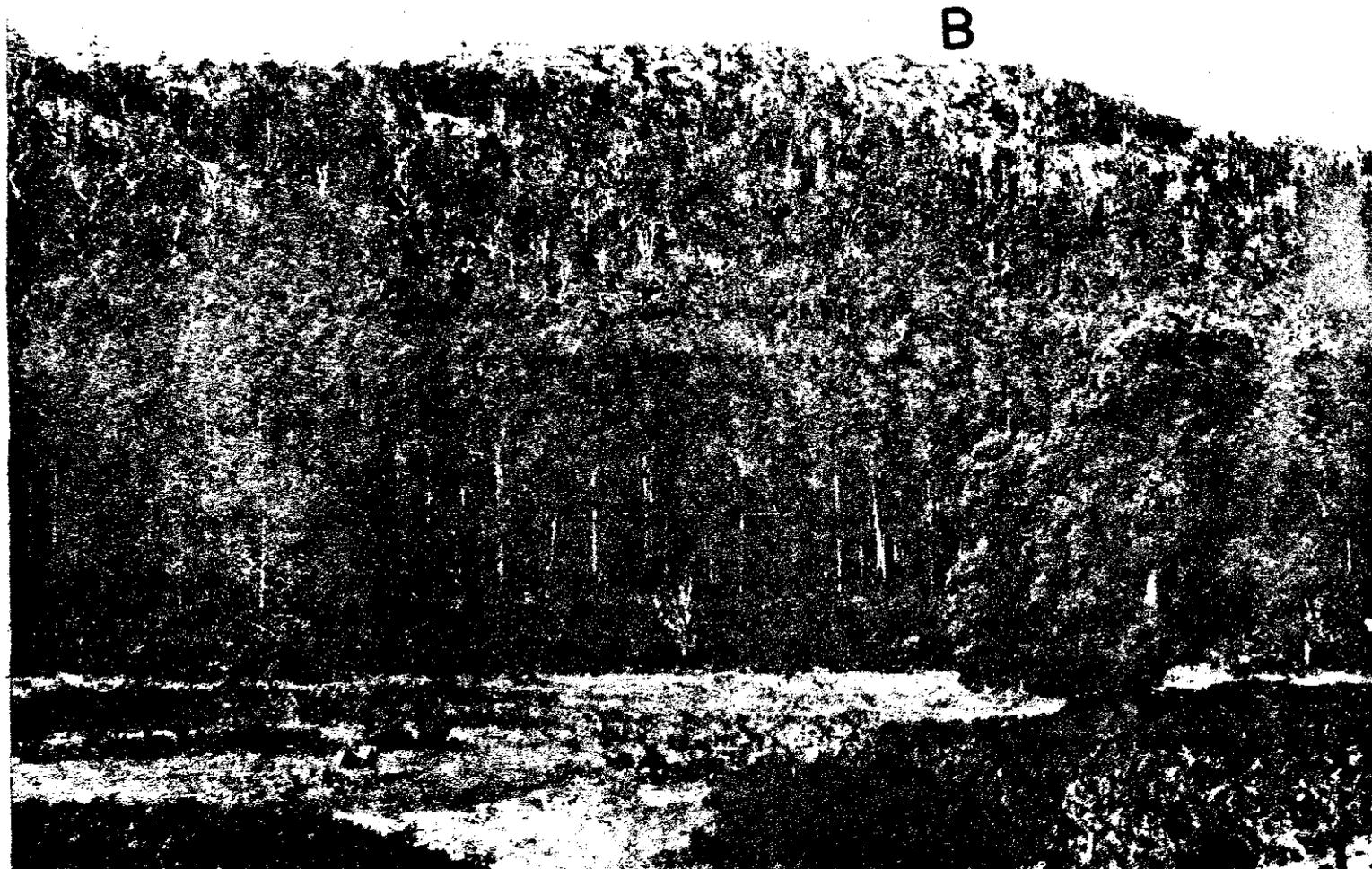
"On 7th July, 1958, as the result of local interest in this prospect, I wrote a short report suggesting that owing to the sporadic occurrence and probable syngenetic occurrence of the molybdenite in undifferentiated granite, a normal sampling programme would not supply sufficient information

The report continues, with the information that, at the suggestion of Mr. Hughes, Mr. B.A. Farquhar of Scottsdale, obtained a half ton sample.

According to a report by Messrs. Manson and Liddy, 28th May, 1959, this sample contained 0.59% MoS_2 . It was admittedly hand-picked, but nevertheless it was decided to drill.

"At Harvey's show a major joint plane in the granite had been trenched and the material on the site did suggest some concentration. The first hole was sited to intersect this at 85 feet below the surface. At this depth a few specks of molybdenite were visible: also at 42 ft., 91 ft., 115 to 117 ft., and 123 ft. However, assays over 10 feet intervals gave nil result. The second hole was drilled vertically, 22 chains north, on the site from which the half ton sample was obtained. MoS_2 and chalcopyrite were seen in the core, but 10 feet samples assayed for MoS_2 , Sn, and Cu gave nil returns, except for 0.02% MoS_2 from 10 to 20 feet, and a trace thereafter to 50 feet. A trace of copper occurred between 10 and 30 feet.

These results were considered quite discouraging and revealed no concentration of MoS_2 at depth.



Mt. Stronach from west. A: original showings, B: trig. point showings.

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Page Five

"As has been pointed out, this very showy platy mineral always appears to the eye in greater concentration than it actually is. Further prospecting in this area is not recommended."

Geology and Mineralization

The Mount Stronach batholith consists of coarse adamellite, hypidiomorphic granular in texture. It is apparently typical of numerous Devonian magmatic intrusions of this type in Tasmania.

The rock gives rise to extensive spalled surfaces and slopes, and is massive, unaltered, and little fractured. Such fractures as are present are tight.

A fairly large proportion of the upper parts of Mount Stronach consists of tableland with relatively limited outcrop and it is possible that different phases of the intrusion may underlie these.

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However, apart from a few finer-grained probable aplitic phases, and some atypical examples containing tourmaline, all the rocks seem of very uniform type and correspond to the description of a sample from this locality given by the Department of Mines: "A medium-grained biotite adamellite of quartz, K-feldspar, plagioclase, biotite, and muscovite. The specimens appear typical of much of the Mount Stronach granite mass."

Minor pegmatitic phases were also noted.

Mineralisation consists of platy crystals of molybdenite from one centimeter to five centimeter in diameter. Some of the best of that seen has been exposed by shot holes put down in the vicinity of a single small rosette showing in the spalled surface of rock. This prospecting work has revealed mineralisation sporadically over some 700 to 800 feet near the topmost point of Mount Stronach, i.e. more than 1000 feet south of the originally known showings, which are located on the western flank. However, the type of mineralisation is essentially similar in both areas. Two more prom-

Page Seven

inent fracture directions are noticeable at 135° and 175° . The mineralization appears to have some relation to the 135° direction but in only one instance was it seen to occur in veinlets, about half a centimeter in width.

Some pyrite and chalcopyrite mineralization was observed, but it appears to be rare. No other evidence of economic mineralization was seen.

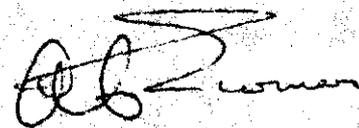
Conclusions and Recommendations

Despite the number of localities where small amounts of mineralization have been found nothing representative of economic potential has been disclosed.

Sampling of these showings would require the blasting and careful collection of the broken rock representing a fairly substantial surrounding volume in each case. This would be difficult and expensive and highly unlikely to be justified by the result.

Alternatively an exploration programme aimed at testing the areas where no rock is exposed in the hopes of discovering possible altered phases of greater potential might be undertaken.

The presently known occurrences, however, appear to hold no economic prospects, and in view of the fact that no alteration or suggestion of widespread uniform dissemination of low-grade mineralization was seen, it is concluded that the prospect is not encouraging.



A. C. TURNER

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