

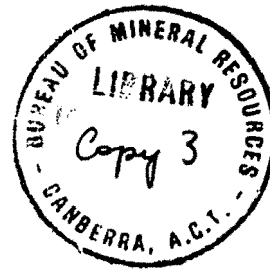
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THE URANIUM-COPPER DEPOSITS
RUM JUNGLE
NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

ABRIDGED PROGRESS REPORT

by

C.J. Sullivan.

28th February, 1952

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SUMMARY

At Whites Deposit, Rum Jungle, chalcopryite-uraninite ore has been intersected in a cross-cut at a depth of 100 ft., and sampling shows a grade of 1.5 per cent. U_3O_8 and 4.6 per cent. Cu. over a distance along the cross-cut of 34 ft; material containing an average of 0.94 per cent. U_3O_8 and 2.97 per cent. Cu extends over 60 ft.

Uranium mineralization is known to occur over a length of 200 ft, but the average width and grade over this distance are unknown. The ore replaces flatly pitching drag-folded beds and the width of ore along the strike is expected to vary considerably.

At Dysons Prospect, about 30,000 tons of autunite-bearing ore, perhaps containing 0.25 per cent. U_3O_8 , has been indicated by drilling.

Browns Prospect is similar in many ways to Whites, but no payable ore has yet been intersected.

In the district as a whole leaching of copper and uranium has been extensive and favourable areas are, in many cases, covered by soil. Structural conditions are such that non-outcropping ore is likely to be found.

To-date, 3,300 ft. of drilling and approximately 700 ft. of underground prospecting have been carried out in the area and the results obtained are considered highly encouraging.

Extensive drilling and underground development are warranted.

SITUATION

The centre of the Rum Jungle uranium-copper field is approximately 2.5 miles north-east of Rum Jungle Siding, which is on the Darwin-Birdum railway, 56 miles south of the port of Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia. The bituminized Stuart Highway passes about 9 miles east of the field and at a point 54 miles south of Darwin a further bitumen road leads westward for 7 miles to the Batchelor Airfield, a wartime air-base, not now equipped for flying. The mining field is 5 miles north of Batchelor Airfield.

HISTORY.

Surface showings of copper carbonates were discovered in the area in the late 19th century and costeans and shallow shafts were sunk. Limited diamond drilling was undertaken on one of the copper prospects, known as Browns, but the holes were not properly sited. The primary mineralization in the area was not adequately tested. No uranium minerals were noted during this time.

In September, 1949, a prospector, J. White, after reading a handbook on uranium prospecting, published by the Australian Bureau of Mineral Resources, re-examined the copper deposits and discovered traces of torbernite and uranium ochres. His discovery was examined by Bureau geologists and geophysicists in September and October of 1949, and testing of the deposits was commenced in May, 1950, after the monsoonal wet season which lasts from November to April, inclusive. Diamond drilling with a light portable machine was undertaken and four prospecting shafts were sunk on various deposits to test the character of the primary mineralization. Encouraging results were obtained, and in 1951, a contract was let for the systematic exploration and development of the more promising deposits.

The initial contract was for about 2,000 feet of development, but this has been carried out only slowly, partly because of difficulties in obtaining men and equipment; the ground is extremely heavy, especially when soaked with water in the wet season and close timbering is essential.

During 1950-51, a total of 3,229 feet of diamond drilling was undertaken, mostly to test, to a depth of about 100 feet, the nature of the material underlying radioactive surface showings. Core recovery has been extremely poor, but it has been found that with systematic collection, sludges yield reliable indications of the presence of uranium.

Radiometric assays, using beta-ray counters, are made in the field and have been found to check well with radiometric assays made in the Melbourne laboratories of the Bureau and with chemical assays undertaken in the Government Laboratories Perth, Western Australia.

The geological and geophysical work of the Bureau has resulted in the discovery of three deposits which may be of economic importance and a number of other low-grade showings have been found. A considerable amount of information on the mineralogy, structure and possible importance of the deposits has been obtained.

GEOLOGICAL SETTING OF DEPOSITS

The deposits so far discovered are situated on the southern flank of a domal structure in Pre-Cambrian sediments. The core of the dome is occupied by the Rum Jungle granite, which is oval in shape and is approximately 8 miles in its major horizontal dimension at the present surface. The area has been photographed only recently (still incomplete) and mapping has been concentrated in the area of known mineralization which is shown on Plate 1. A regional map is being prepared.

The sedimentary rocks are mainly a shallow-water group, consisting of conglomerates, quartzites and limestone. A slate formation approximately 1,000 feet in thickness, which is graphitic in part, is the main host rock for the ore deposits.

The Giants Reef fault (Plate 1) is, perhaps, the most striking structural feature in the area. It trends north-westerly and has a ^{N. 20° W.} semi-vertical dip. It has been observed in aerial photographs to continue for 55 miles to the south-west. At Rum Jungle, it faults both the granite and the sediments and has a horizontal displacement of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Though no uranium has been found in the fault itself, the ore deposits appear to be related to the presence of the fault.

As shown in Plate 1, the Giants Reef fault has led to the formation of a major drag fold, whose axis trends parallel with the fault. The main ore deposits are situated along the axis of this drag fold and are associated with axial plane shears which dip 85° N.

A second group of faults, complementary to Giants Reef Fault, trend about N 30° E. and dip easterly. One major example of this type of fault passes 240 feet west of No. 4 Shaft, Whites Deposit, and has a horizontal displacement of 2,000 feet. The relationship of these faults to ore occurrence is not well known, but within the workings, it has been found that small faults of this type bound the ore shoots in some cases.

The known uranium-copper deposits at Rum Jungle occur in slate, the higher-grade material being found in graphitic portions of the bed. This bed is relatively incompetent and in the vicinity of the ore deposits, has been dragged and puckered. Carbonaceous material precipitates uranium from solution and this may have had some effect. Although the major concentrations of uranium now found have undoubtedly been formed in structural traps during a period of folding, faulting and granite formation, it appears not unlikely that this carbonaceous bed originally contained syngenetic uranium in small quantities; certainly, the graphitic slate is a useful aid to prospecting, and although, at present, there is little direct evidence of continuous mineralization of the Congo-Rhodesian type along it, the presence of considerable soil and alluvial cover and the prevalence of surface leaching of copper and uranium minerals make it necessary to prospect this bed with some thoroughness.

THE LODES

The main uranium mineralization has been found over a length of approximately 8000 feet of the graphitic slate bed (Plate 1). From west to east, the most important deposits are Browns Prospect, Whites Deposit and Dysons Prospect. Lesser occurrence of uranium have been found at the Intermediate Prospect and at Whites Extended. Disseminated uranium mineralization, apparently not associated with definite sulphide deposits, has been found elsewhere in the area, but these occurrences do not at present seem to offer possibilities of production and will not be further mentioned.

WHITES DEPOSIT

Whites Deposit is described first, because so far it is the most important and most is known about it.

Mineralogy, Grade

At the surface, graphitic schists containing malachite, torbernite and yellow uranium ochres were found at intervals over a length of 200 feet. According to Stillwell pseudo-malachite replaces torbernite in some cases. No continuous lode could be traced and costeaning revealed what appeared to be three separate lodes, none of which could be traced for more than 20 feet. Anomalous radioactivity was found over a length of 600 feet and a width of approximately 200 feet.

There was no limonitic gossan and it was thought possible that the uranium staining was due to precipitation from ground waters by the graphitic slate. The amount of copper at the surface is quite small compared with that found at the 100 ft. level. However, microscopic study indicated the former presence of sulphides and a shaft (No. 2) was sunk on the best surface showing. In this shaft, ore containing approximately 1 per cent. U_3O_8 was found to a depth of 6 feet, below which there appeared to have been considerable leaching of uranium. From 6 ft. to 22 ft. the grade fell to about 0.1 per cent. U_3O_8 . Water table was at 28 ft. and below this was found essentially primary ore, consisting of slate impregnated with chalcopryrite, crystalline uraninite, pyrite and cubanite; around the water table, chalcocite and covellite were of common occurrence and a polished section investigation by Stillwell showed that these

replaced uraninite in some cases. From 28 ft. to 45 ft. (final depth) the ore contained approximately 1.5 per cent. U₃O₈ over a width of 5 ft. (shaft width).

The most important discoveries were made late in 1951 and early in 1952. A southerly cross-cut at the 100 ft. level, from No. 4 Shaft (Plate 3) intersected, over a width of 34 feet, ore containing 1.51 per cent. U₃O₈ and 4.6 per cent. Cu. To the north of this high-grade ore, there is a width of 22 ft. containing 0.12 per cent. U₃O₈ and 0.26 per cent. Cu and a further 4 ft. width to the south of the main lode contains 0.21 per cent. U₃O₈. Copper mineralization continues to the limits of crosscutting. Taking a cut-off value of 0.07 per cent. U₃O₈, the cross-cut exposed, over a width of 60 ft., ore containing 0.94 per cent. U₃O₈ and 2.97 per cent. Cu. In the 100 ft. level from No. 1 shaft, ore containing 1.37 per cent. U₃O₈ was found over a width of 12 ft. These results are tabulated below:-

Summary of Sampling Results to 22/2/52.

No. 4 Shaft
100 ft. level
S. Cross-cut

<u>High-grade Ore</u>	<u>U₃O₈</u>			<u>Cu</u>
	<u>W. Wall</u>	<u>E. Wall</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>E. Wall</u>
Position in Cross-Cut	50'-86'	44'-76'		44'-76'
Width	36'	32'	34'	32'
Cut off value	0.58%	0.51%	0.51%	2.4%
Average Grade	1.88%	1.09%	1.51%	4.6%

Low-Grade Ore

(a) North of High Grade Ore

Position in Cross-Cut	30'-50'	20'-44'		20'-44'
Width	20'	24'	22'	24'
Cut off value	0.07%	0.07%	0.07%	0.15%
Average Grade	0.13%	0.11%	0.12%	0.26%

(b) South of High-grade Ore

Position in Cross-Cut	86'-90'	76'-80'		76'-80'
Width	4'	4'	4'	4'
Cut off value	0.20%	0.23%	0.20%	3.6%
Average Grade	0.20%	0.23%	0.21%	3.6%

High- and Low-Grade Ore

Position in Cross-Cut	30'-90'	20'-80'		20'-80'
Width	60'	60'	60'	60'
Cut off value	0.07%	0.07%	0.07%	0.15%
Average Grade	1.19%	0.68%	0.94%	2.97%

No. 1 Shaft
100 ft. Level
S. Cross-Cut

High-Grade Ore

Position in Cross-Cut	14'-26'	14'-26'		
Width	12'	12'	12'	
Cut off value	0.42%	0.39%	0.39%	
Average Grade	1.09%	1.66%	1.37%	

Additional information obtained from drilling is shown on the longitudinal section, Plate 6. This shows that the presence of uranium-bearing ore has been indicated over a length of 200 ft; a drill-hole 60 ft. north of No. 4 Shaft proved ore to a depth of 180 ft.

Possible Structure.

Plate 1 shows that the group of prospects found so far form a line roughly parallel to Giants Reef. In the detailed mapping of exposures at Whites Prospect, mineralization was found to follow 85° North dipping shears which are parallel to Giants Reef in strike. One of these was followed down in No. 2 shaft and they may be major controls.

The ore exposed in the cross-cut from No. 4 shaft shows clearly, however, that replacement of particular beds has taken place and that the higher-grade ore occurs where these beds are most crumpled; the crumpling is most marked in the vicinity of minor shears and apparently results from shearing. In both 100 ft. level cross-cuts, the minor folding pitches easterly at 30 degrees to 40 degrees, and, as the ore is replacing these folded beds, it is expected that the shoots will pitch with the folding.

Minor shears have been formed on the limbs of anticlinal folds, producing attenuation on the limbs and thickening of the crest. Ore is found in the crest and produces a saddle-reef effect. This may be seen in hand specimens and in the section through No. 1 Shaft (Plate 5). The section through No. 4 Shaft (Plate 4) also suggests that an anticline is present.

The pitch of the intersection of the Giants Reef type faults and of the minor faults on the limbs of drag folds is much the same as the pitch of the drag folds themselves.

On the basis of the above evidence, it is thought likely that the dominant structure is of the Broken Hill type - a semi-vertical shear, or zone of shearing, with favourable beds dragged along the shear and replaced by ore. The pitch of the ore is likely to be that of the drag-folded beds across the shears, in this case, about 35 degrees east. The crests of the anticlinal drag folds are the most favourable for ore, and, in the section through No. 1 Shaft, this produces a Bendigo-type structure. In the section through No. 4 Shaft, however, it appears that only the southern limb of the fold carries ore, which is limited to the northward by the shear passing through No. 2 Shaft (Plate 4).

Some implications of the proposed structure are suggested on the 100 ft. level plan (Plate 3).

The ore shoot intersected in the No. 4 Shaft cross-cut, is expected to trend north-easterly and terminate on the east-west vertical fault. In view of drilling results other drag folds lying to the east of this fold apparently make ore. The shoot in No. 4 Shaft cross-cut may continue to the south-west for an unknown, but limited, distance, the limitation being imposed, by the dying out of the drag folding. Further ore was found in D.D.H. WDB, 50 ft. west of No. 4 Shaft (Plate 6) and this may indicate the presence of another shoot.

The pitch-length of the uranium-bearing drag-folded beds is unknown and drilling to test this is very important. If the Bendigo-type aspects of the structure are kept in mind, drilling for repetitions of saddle-like deposits is warranted. This would be much the same as testing for further favourable horizons, dragged against a shear.

Possible Size.

Estimates of the possible size of the deposit depend on structural interpretations and on the persistence of the mineralization. The width exposed in No. 4 Shaft cross-cut may be somewhat misleading; part of the cross-cut follows the same bed for some distance and thus does not necessarily expose the true thickness of the ore. Estimates of reserves will have to await further drilling and underground development. However, for a uranium deposit, present exposures are impressive and it would not be surprising if the 100 ft. level development exposed 300 to 500 tons of ore per vertical foot.

DYSONS PROSPECT

The known information is shown in Plate 7.

At the surface, the uranium-bearing mineral was mainly autunite with smaller amounts of yellow uranium ochres and occasional green secondary minerals. No copper is present and the deposit is quite different from that found at Whites and Browns. Below water table much pyrite occurs.

In the first costean put down, 3 seams of uranium-bearing material, each 3 to 4 ft. in thickness, occur over a total width of 16 ft. Samples from the costean contained up to 5% U₃O₈. Subsequent costeaning revealed a lode-system extending over a length of 130 ft., but individual seams of ore within this system appear to be discontinuous. Scout drilling and shaft sinking have shown that autunite extends for almost 100 ft. below the surface and the nature of the primary uranium mineralization is still unknown. Quartzite intersected in a shaft sunk to a depth of 84 ft. contains abundant pyrite.

The ore found to-date occurs in bands of graphitic slate interbedded with quartzite. These beds dip 30° to the east and the ore would not be easy to mine.

Four drill holes cut lode channels at up to 160 ft. down-dip. Core recovery was poor, but sludge samples gave the following results:-

<u>Drill Hole</u>	<u>Width (Feet)</u>	<u>Grade (% U₃O₈)</u>
DDA	15	0.22
DDB	30	0.09
DDC	10	0.51
DDE	15	0.44

The drilling is believed to have indicated the presence of possibly 30,000 tons of oxidized ore containing 0.25 per cent. U₃O₈. A shaft has been commenced with a view to obtaining more accurate information concerning the amount of ore present.

It is considered possible that the ore following the flatly-dipping beds is in a secondary structure, and that the dominant structure is vertical, as at Whites Deposit. This possibility could be tested by drilling.

BROWNS PROSPECT

At the surface, Browns Prospect is the most impressive copper showing in the district and is the only one which has received any attention in the past. Malachite is found in contorted and sheared graphitic slate over a length of approximately 1200 ft. and over widths up to 50 ft. The amount of copper present at the surface would probably not average more than 0.5 per cent., but in view of the experience

at Whites Deposit, payable copper mineralization may be present in the primary zone. A marked self-potential anomaly, which could be partly due to graphitic slates, but may also represent sulphide mineralization, has been traced through the deposit.

At the eastern end of the copper-bearing outcrop, uranium occurs at the surface in small quantities over a length of 300 ft. Two drill holes tested these showings in 1951, but sludge sampling did not reveal uranium in excess of 0.1 per cent. U₃O₈.

A shaft is to be sunk on a showing of ore carrying uranium ochre, situated 60 ft. east of the old Main Shaft (depth 30 ft.). The uranium ochres are contained in a seam about 10 inches thick which contains 0.5 to 1.0 per cent. U₃O₈ and may be traced over a length of 10 ft. It is hoped that this may lead to a discovery similar to that at Whites, where surface showings of uranium were not greatly different from those at Browns and copper deposition at the surface was not nearly as impressive. Apart from the effects of surface leaching, non-outcropping ore could occur for structural reasons, as indicated at Whites Prospect.

WHITES EXTENDED.

At the surface, marked radioactivity was found over a length of 130 feet and scattered fragments of autunite-bearing sandstone were noted. Two costeans were sunk 50 ft. apart; in one, material containing 0.39 per cent. U₃O₈ was found over a width of 16 feet and in the second, a lode occurs containing 0.25 per cent. U₃O₈ over a width of 5 ft.

The deposit was tested by two drill holes to an average depth of 100 ft. but none of them intersected primary mineralization. Results were as follows:-

	<u>Depth</u> <u>ft.</u>	<u>Grade</u> <u>% U₃O₈</u>
No. 1 DDH	90-126	0.122
No. 2 DDH	30- 35	0. 10

The deposit is similar to Dysons and has been shown to contain a small reserve of low-grade secondary ore. The nature of the primary material is still unknown and further testing is warranted.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

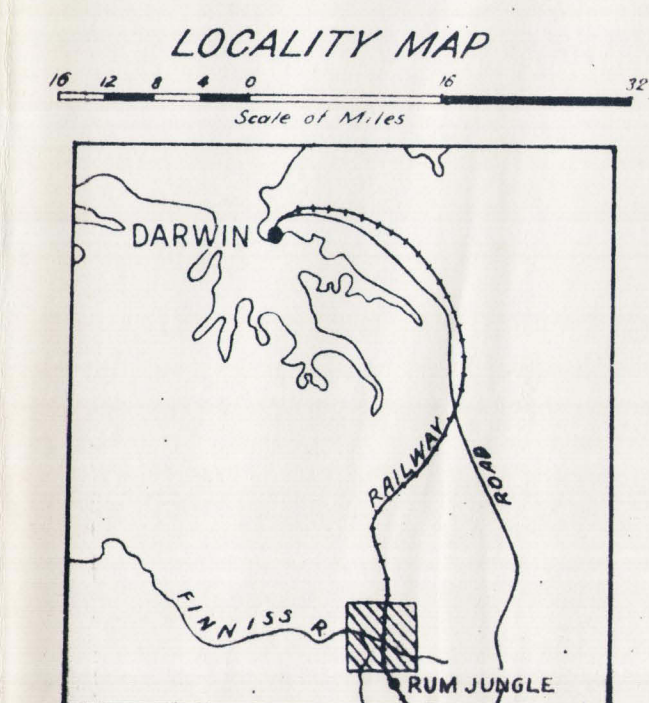
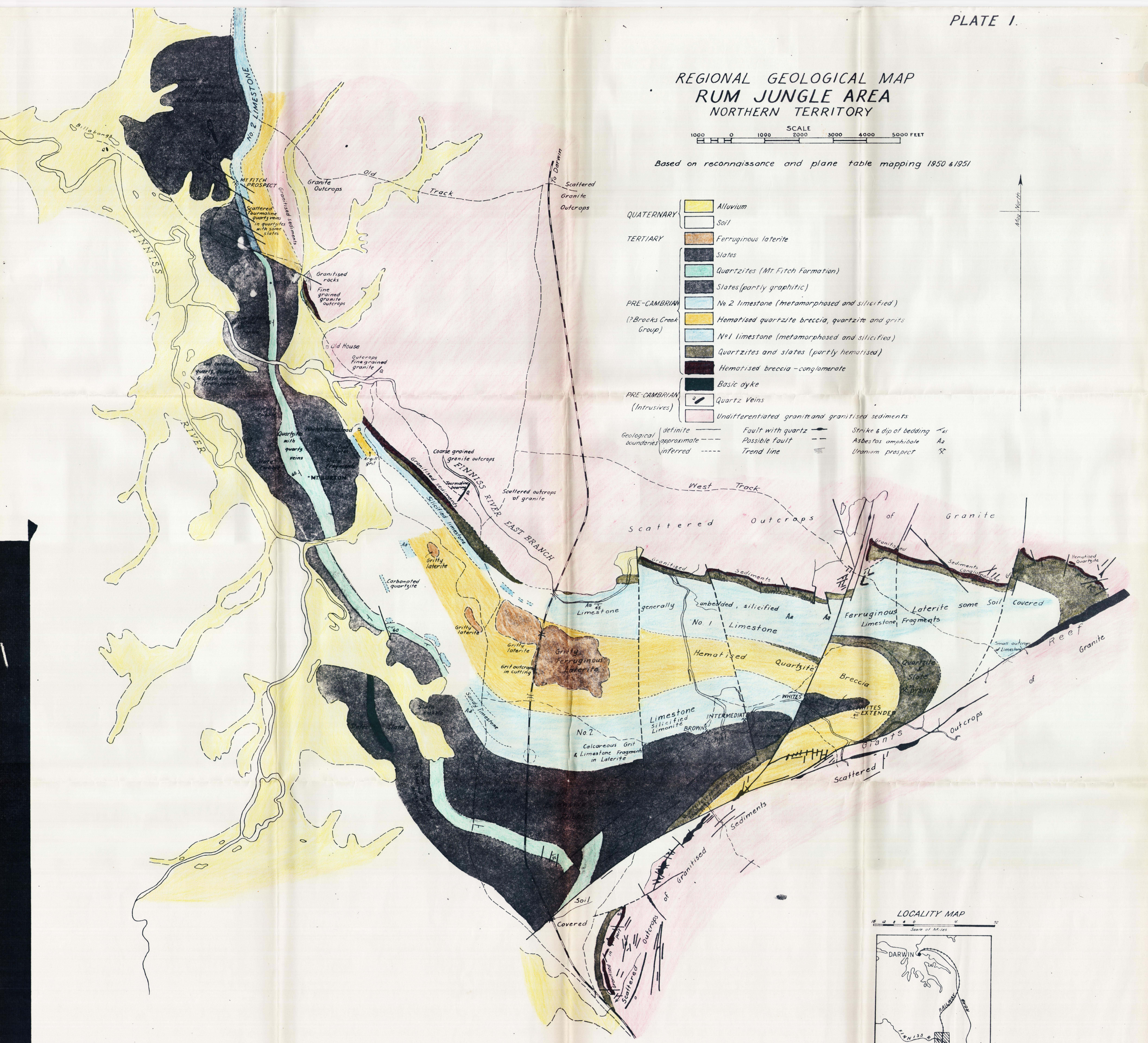
The above report is based on geological work carried out at various times by H.J. Ward, R.S. Matheson, E.K. Carter, N.J. Mackay, K.W.B. Iten and G. Sleis, of the geological staff of the Bureau. Geophysical investigations by D. Dyson, M. Allen and others has also been utilized. The ideas presented on the structural control of the ore deposits are mainly those of the author.

REGIONAL GEOLOGICAL MAP RUM JUNGLE AREA NORTHERN TERRITORY

SCALE 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 FEET

Based on reconnaissance and plane table mapping 1950 & 1951

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| QUATERNARY | Alluvium |
| | Soil |
| TERTIARY | Ferruginous laterite |
| | Slates |
| | Quartzites (Mt Fitch Formation) |
| | Slates (partly graphitic) |
| PRE-CAMBRIAN | No 2 limestone (metamorphosed and silicified) |
| (?Brooks Creek Group) | Hematized quartzite breccia, quartzite and grits |
| | No 1 limestone (metamorphosed and silicified) |
| | Quartzites and slates (partly hematized) |
| | Hematized breccia-conglomerate |
| PRE-CAMBRIAN (Intrusives) | Basic dyke |
| | Quartz Veins |
| | Undifferentiated granite and granitised sediments |
-
- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Geological boundaries | definite | Fault with quartz | Strike & dip of bedding |
| | approximate | Possible fault | Asbestos amphibole |
| | inferred | Trend line | Uranium prospect |



SURFACE GEOLOGY & WORKINGS WHITE'S DEPOSIT RUM JUNGLE, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

PLATE 2

SCALE
40 0 40 80 120 160 FEET



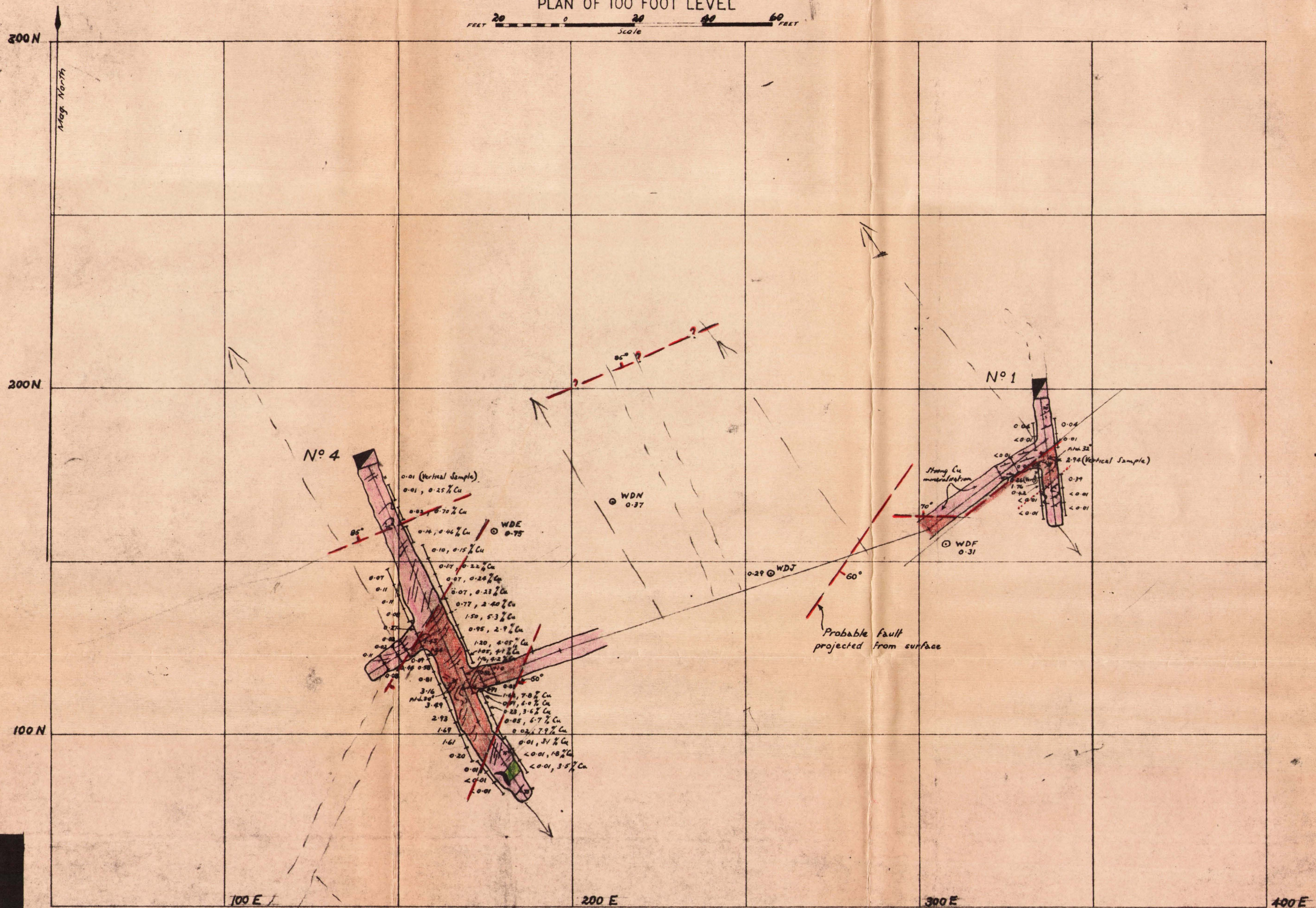
REFERENCE

- Approximate Geological Boundary
-?.....? Inferred Geological Boundary
- + + + Isolated Outcrops
- 60 Strike and dip of strata
- 30 Vertical dip
- 18 Strata with curving dip
- 18 Pitch of minor anticline
- F Probable fault
- Shaft, accessible
- Costean
- Dump
- W.D.A. Diamond drill hole
- Base peg
- Direction of water flow in stream
- Topographical Contours (feet above S.L.)
- Geiger-Muller contours (times background)

- Soil
- Alluvium
- Laterite
- Quartz breccia
- Carbonaceous slate and graphitic schists
- White-spotted slate
- Felspathic slate
- Talcose slates, in part micaceous and chloritic.
- Quartz
- Secondary uranium mineralisation

D52/A8/NT47C-15

20 0 20 40 60
FEET Scale FEET



REFERENCE

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| | Horizontal Channel sample | | Trend lines |
| 0.14 | U assay result (% U ₃ O ₈) | | Fault |
| 2.31% Cu | Cu assay result | | Pitch of fold |
| | Survey line | | Carbonaceous slate & graphitic schist |
| WDF
0.51 | Diamond drill hole intersection
(sledge assay, % U ₃ O ₈) | | Talcose chloritic schist |
| | Strike & dip of strata | | Quartz, mineralised |
| | | | High grade U ore |

