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ALLEGED WOLFRAM OCCURRENCE NEAR LAKE KOOLYMILKA

by

N.H. Fisher and
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I. INTRODUCTION.

Prospectors J.C. Paul and T.C. Ash claimed to have discovered wolfram near Lake Koolymilka in the area reserved for the Long Range Weapons project. The area in which these prospectors were operating is situated 0.6 miles north of the old Mingappy homestead (now boundary rider's hut) and windmill, which is 1.2 miles northeast of the Woomera - Koolymilka Road, at a point 21.1 miles from Woomera village.

The Director of Mines, South Australia, states that no claims or leases have been granted and in fact claims were pegged on January 24th, 1948, and the area had been declared a Commonwealth Reserve on January 12th, 1948.

II. GENERAL GEOLOGY.

The rocks of the area consist of flat lying bedded sandstones, with dips usually less than 5 degrees, which are regarded by the South Australian Geological Survey as belonging to the Adelaide Series of Late Pre-Cambrian age.

The surface relief is generally low and some of the ridges are capped by lateritic material underlain by silicified sandstone. The low ridge where most of the prospecting has been carried out has a capping of grey limestone which overlies the laterite. Laterite outcrops around the side of the ridge and the surface is littered with residual ferruginous quartzitic boulders - "gibbers" - of lateritic origin. No fossils were found in any of the samples collected. As the limestone overlies the laterite it is presumably not earlier than Miocene.


III. WORKINGS.

The work that has been done consists of a few potholes up to 4 feet in depth and one shaft 10 feet deep, on which a windlass has been fitted. The shallower workings exposed mostly kaolinised and leached sediments, with flinty layers in places. The shaft passes through 5½ feet of kaolinised material of which the bottom 1½ feet contains numerous horizontal veinlets of gypsum up to 1 inch in thickness. Below this to the bottom of the shaft is 4 feet of highly ferruginous material of lateritic origin. This is partly friable but at the bottom of the shaft consists of solid limonite, which is lustrous on freshly broken faces, and this is the only material that might possibly have been mistaken by the prospectors for wolfram. It is however of no commercial value and does not indicate the presence of any metalliferous orebody. The labour put into the shaft has been entirely wasted as similar material outcrops on the surface around the side of the low ridge on which the shaft is situated.

IV. CONCLUSION.

No wolfram is present or any other mineral of economic importance.

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