

State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

702 Woodlark Building
Portland, Oregon

REPORT BY N. S. WAGNER

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QUARTZ CRYSTALS

On the theory that "Where there is smoke there is fire" I have been paying an increasing amount of attention to the accounts on the occurrences of quartz crystals which make the rounds here, and for the records, I am presenting a summary of the more important rumors, reports, and specimens.

I have tried to follow up some of these prospects, particularly in the Burnt River district, but have had no help whatsoever from the various quartz crystal hounds who bring in specimens. So far none of them have apparently done more than the most elementary sort of prospecting and almost without exception, they are a very irritating class of people - secretive, suspicious to the point of almost talking in monosyllables. They won't tell me where they find their crystals other than in the most general terms and they are resentful of any inquiries I make. Yet, I have heard tales of crystals having been found there in many different places and by many different people, and I have seen a satisfactory number of crystals to back up the tales. To be sure, none of the crystals seen to date have been potentially usable, but I have seen many clear small crystals and several partially clear large ones so that I can't help but feel that some day somebody will turn up with some usable ones. I did spend two days prospecting on my own so to speak, but this proved aimless and I gave it up.

THE BURNT RIVER DISTRICT

Crystals reported found on both sides of river in the headwaters of the various tributary creeks as far as 4-5 miles distant from the river between Durkee and Bridgeport.

Dr. Biswell reports that Mr. McClenahan, Superintendent of Lime Cement found crystals in head waters of Deer Creek. I wrote McClenahan but he is on vacation in the east and will not be back for quite some time yet.

Mr. Dunnington, Resort Street, Baker, reports finding crystals on Dark Canyon and on several of the ridges across the river therefrom and had a miscellaneous assortment of specimens to back it up. Also talked about having had a bucket full gathered casually over a period of years. This, of course, included many big and clear specimens as he remembers them, but they have been given away as curios. Mrs. Dunnington, however, did borrow a big crystal 5" through and 6-7" tall from a neighbor (identity kept secret as well as place where it was found other than to say it was in the Dark Canyon area). This crystal was fractured to the point of being totally useless, but it was clear quartz. She also had miscellaneous clear small ones.

Mr. Steel, Durkee, has brought in several well formed crystals about two inches through, but mostly opaque. He has three different sources and thinks he remembers where he saw clear ones once. He doesn't say where he finds these from other than to admit it was along the Burnt River. He was much surprised to

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learn that crystals were found in Dark Canyon, and when I mentioned occurrences on the other side of the river, his wife chimed in with, "Why you never found any on that side, did you?", so by the process of elimination I locate his occurrences on the north side of the river on the Durkee half of the stretch.

Mr. Burlingame, address unknown, has spent several week-ends running around the hills there and regularly brings in small crystals some of which are very clear. (By small, I mean a half to three quarters inch through).

Mr. Lovejoy, who lives below Prescott's geyser, has a 10" crystal, 3-4" through found buried in their yard, presumably carried there by someone from the hills back of the place. This crystal was not clear.

CORNUCOPIA DISTRICT (including Sparta)

The Shanghai Gulch property has already been reported on, this being the only occurrence I have had a chance to examine. Nothing is being done with it but one of the owners asked for another copy of the report to send to "Washington". Asked if they had taken any steps to clean out the pit so something tangible could be seen she informed me very emphatically that they didn't intend to spend any money on it. They want to get a government man "who has had some experience mining crystals" to examine the property to learn for sure "if the geologic conditions were right". I couldn't help asking her what he would see that I couldn't see if the hole weren't cleaned out first, which question I suspect she didn't take too kindly.

Dr. Goodspeed confirms the fact that occasional partings in the vein in the Cornucopia mine were lined with well formed, clear crystals, but that as he remembers them, all were far too small to conform to specifications. Mr. Dunn, recently engineer there, says the same, but tells of a reported occurrence on the Snake near there where 5 to 7" crystals are found. He was going to get a man to go in and pack out 50 pounds and bring them in here, but to date he hasn't showed up.

A lady agate-cutter, mineral collector, etc., who didn't give me her name, but who did know her minerals pretty well, came in to tell me about a six inch vein of quartz which was so clear you could see into it a foot or two. She supposedly had seen this and wanted to know if such quartz would be suitable too, or did it have to be crystallized? I assured her that such quartz was crystallized even though it didn't show typical external faces. She wouldn't tell me where it was other than "we might say Cornucopia district", but she said she planned to go there in about six weeks and would get samples.

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CONNOR CREEK MINE

William Merritt, Seneca Stock pile, told me that when he was superintendent there, they cut a parting which had excellent crystals which might bear looking into but that tunnel is caved. Joe Haskins is looking over the dump there now.

DESOLATION VALLEY, or back of Olive Lake.

A Mr. Huskins or some such name is reported to have been mining quartz crystals somewhere in the back of Olive Lake or in Desolation Valley. He is reported to have sold a couple hundred pounds to General Electric last year -- to be dissatisfied because one shipment they pay him big, the next not, etc. My informant, Joe Haskins, says Huskins places these crystals. I told this story to Ned Thomas who verifies it to the extent that he remembers he met Huskins ten years ago, and at the time Huskins told him he was placering in Desolation and commented on the quartz crystals he found. Thomas had forgotten the incident until I told him my story. This more or less lends weight to the existence of Huskins and quartz crystals and identifies them with Desolation Valley, but otherwise I find no trace of the man. The Forest Service has inquired of all their lookout men and guards and find no lead on his whereabouts. One of the guards is an old-timer in the district and he doesn't know of him, either this season, or from earlier seasons. I intend to keep on trying to track this bird down as Haskins was talking to him less than a year ago.

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