

THE SUNDAY OREGONIANPortland, September 2, 1934SULPHUR DEPOSITS ON ADAMS STUDIEDProspecting Work Carried On Under Difficulties5 DEEP HOLES DRILLED

Glacial Ice Cap Penetrated to Depth of 250 feet; Success of Venture Anticipated.

GULER, Wash., Sept. 1.--(Special.)-- Six sure-footed pack horses have picked their way through the broken summit ice of Mount Adams to deliver more than 20 loads of supplies to workers engaged in preliminary sulphur-drilling operations on the mountain's top. These six horses during the summer have established a remarkable record for endurance.

Outfitted by the Glacier Mining company of White Salmon, Wash., the horse train brings two or more loads weekly to the summit so that nothing may delay the workers during the few weeks remaining in which mining operations on the mountain top will be possible. This concern, consisting of 20 claimholders, headed by Wade Dean of White Salmon, is engaged in prospect work to determine the extent of sulphur deposits about the old crater rim of Mount Adams.

Sample Cores Obtained

Some work was done last year when crews dug a number of holes up to 20 feet deep on the exposed ridges or thinly coated parts of the mountain, but no great progress was made until about eight weeks ago when a diamond drill was dragged to the summit. At present four holes of from 50 to 200 feet deep have been completed and sample cores taken for assaying.

Work now is at a critical stage, for the fifth drill hole has been sunk to a depth of 250 feet without penetrating the glacial ice cap of the mountain. According to the geologist, Mr. Fowler, if the drill breaks through the ice soon and brings forth a core of fair-grade sulphur, strong evidence will be had to indicate the presence of a solid deposit of the ore over the entire top of the mountain, while if only volcanic rock is encountered the probability will be that the sulphur lies only in large ridges around the crater rim.

Page Two

Many difficulties have been encountered in the use of the drilling apparatus upon the mountain. Not the least of these is the tendency of the sublayers of ice to shift slightly from time to time, pinching the drill shaft. Again, the greatest care must be taken that the water used to facilitate drilling be kept sufficiently salty that it will not freeze around the shaft. Incidentally, the transportation of the salt is one of the chief problems of transport.

Adams Stormy Peak

Aside from drilling, the men have still another method of prospecting for the sulphur deposits. This consists of lowering a worker into the almost bottomless crevasses near the rim to study the rock that is bared by the breaking away of the ice. Due to the constantly shifting ice this season, the men must be careful to choose a solid spot to anchor themselves.

In estimating the purity of the ore Mr. Fowler said that while some pure sulphur has been found near the active fumeroles, the average run of ore ranges from 60 to 80 per cent pure.

The greatest handicap faced by the summit crew is the type of weather that prevails on Mount Adams. Adams is the stormiest peak in the Columbia basin, for its 12,307-foot summit seems always to push up into the rolling clouds that often pass above the neighboring peaks. During August at night the thermometer went as low as 18 below zero, while on a clear, bright day with hardly a bit of wind the temperature often stays at 18 above zero all day.

During the week of August 5 the crew was "frozen in" for several days while a two-foot blanket of snow was deposited on parts of the summit.

A new map based on the revised contour of the mountain as brought out through the company's work is being prepared by the geologist.

Methods of Mining Studied

Mining company officials are as yet too uncertain of the results of these preliminary operations to make any definite statement concerning methods of mining or transportation. They have indicated that the setup might consist of a main tunnel entering the mountain in the steep slope between the so-called 11,500-foot "first summit"



Page Three

and the main summit. All subsidiary underground operations would then work from this opening. If the deposit warrants extensive development as is hoped, a tramway might be constructed from this entrance to timberline.

According to Mr. Dean, after the construction is once finished, work can be carried on over the entire year, as the buckets will keep the tramway cleared without aid, and all other machinery and workmen will be underground.

There are no accommodations for climbers at the top of Adams now, for the government no longer keeps a lookout on top. Mr. Dean, however, along with most of the other men interested in the sulphur project, is an ardent booster of Mount Adams' scenic and recreational advantages and he hopes it will be understood that any commercial development of the mountain will be carried on in such a manner that it will in no way disfigure it or change its contour.

Two Photographs

- (1) Three riders on horseback and three pack-horses standing in a snowfield.

Caption: THEY SCALE MOUNT ADAMS Six horses have made more than 20 trips up Mount Adams this year, carrying supplies to sulphur miners working near the summit.

- (2) Several horses standing in snow with part of a building showing to the right in the photograph.

Caption: A FEW MINUTES' REST Some of the horses at summit cabin (12,307 feet) before returning to timberline.