History of the Peacock Mine, Adams County, Idaho

Victoria E. Mitchell

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Morrill Hall, Third Floor
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Moscow, Idaho 83844-3014

Staff Report 97-14
April 1997
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This report was prepared under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, Region IV, as part of a project to identify and describe inactive and abandoned mines in the state of Idaho. Work on this project included preparing detailed histories of mines in Region IV that had significant recorded production. The information in this report is from a number of published and unpublished sources in the Idaho Geological Survey's mineral property files. Where not otherwise noted, most of the mine production data is drawn from the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) annual volumes on Mineral Resources of the United States (1882-1923) and the equivalent volumes produced by the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM) (Mineral Resources of the United States, 1924-1931, and Minerals Yearbook, 1932 to present). Information on underground workings and mine equipment is generally from the annual reports of the Idaho Inspector of Mines (IMIR) published from 1899 to 1979. After 1974, the Mine Inspector's office was known as the Mine Safety Bureau, a section of the Idaho Department of Labor and Industrial Services. Detailed accounts of mine operations are, for the most part, drawn from the annual reports prepared by the companies for the State Inspector of Mines; these reports were required by law and the information contained in them formed the basis of the Mine Inspector's annual reports. Reports of recent developments are taken from the Idaho Geological Survey's (IGS) annual reports on the developments in mining and minerals in Idaho (from 1984 to present) or from similar reports produced by the Survey's predecessor, the Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology (IBMG) from 1975 to 1984. Other published sources are referenced in the text. A complete bibliography is included at the end of the report. Where direct quotations are taken from source materials, the original spelling and grammar are preserved even in cases where they do not conform to currently accepted usage.
History of the Peacock Mine, Adams County, Idaho

Victoria E. Mitchell

The Peacock Mine is in northwestern Adams County. It is at an elevation of 6,700 feet near the head of Copper Creek, a tributary of Deep Creek (Figure 1). The South Peacock, which published accounts sometimes confused with the Peacock, is a few hundred feet south and about 2,000 feet farther up the hillside (Figure 2). Both properties are just north of the northern boundary of the Seven Devils mining district and are within the Hells Canyon-Seven Devils Scenic Area.

The mines are tactite deposits, formed by the alteration of limestone blocks by mineralizing solutions from a quartz diorite stock (Figures 3 and 4). Fracturing during and after the intrusion of the diorite provided space for the copper sulfides. The primary ore minerals are bornite and chalcopyrite in a gangue of garnet and subordinate epidote, diopside, tremolite, actinolite, hedenbergite, and other minerals. Additional copper minerals include cuprite, chrysocolla, malachite, chalcocite, and covellite (Figure 5; Cook, 1954).

The copper deposits in the Seven Devils region were discovered by Levi Allen in 1862, while he was leading an expedition to explore the practicality of expanding steamboat service up the Snake River. Allen discovered the copper outcrops near Kinney Point while returning to Lewiston (Wells, 1983). He worked a small placer operation on the ground until it was exhausted, but only did assessment work on the copper claims (Livingston and Laney, 1920). (See Table 1 for individuals and companies operating at the mine.)

1Idaho Geological Survey, Main Office at Moscow, University of Idaho, Moscow.
Figure 1. Map of northwestern Adams County and the Hells Canyon region, showing the location of the Peacock Mine (U.S. Forest Service Payette National Forest, scale 1/4 inch = 1 mile).
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Figure 4. Geologic sketch map of the Peacock and South Peacock mines (Map No. 7 from Livingston, D.C., and F.B. Laney, 1920, Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology Bulletin 1).
Figure 5. Close-up of ore in the Peacock open pit, 1994 (Idaho Geological Survey photograph by Earl H. Bennett).
Table 1. Individuals and companies operating at the Peacock and South Peacock Mines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Officer</th>
<th>Date Incorporated</th>
<th>Charter Forfeited</th>
<th>Year(s) at Mine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levi Allen</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1862-1876?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granville Stewart and S.K. Hauser</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1876-?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac I. Lewis</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1877-1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert and Reinhold Kleinschmidt</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1886-1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Mining Company¹</td>
<td>A.L. Kleinschmidt (position unknown)</td>
<td>Sept. 11, 1911</td>
<td>Oct. 1, 1930</td>
<td>1891-1893?; 19117-1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Copper Company</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1896-1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston and Seven Devils Copper Company</td>
<td>Chas. W. Whitcomb, Vice President</td>
<td>Sept. 30, 1899</td>
<td>Dec. 1, 1912</td>
<td>1899-1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.W. Jones (lessee)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1904-1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George M. Boggs (lessee)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1907-1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Copper Company, Ltd.; Idaho Copper Co.</td>
<td>Cooley Butler (position unknown)</td>
<td>Jan. 10, 1920; name changed May 24, 1926</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>1919-1935(?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Copper Corporation (South Peacock)</td>
<td>O.H. Griggs, President</td>
<td>Filed in Idaho: April 4, 1925; merged with Id. Cu Co. — Apr. 27, 1926</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1925-1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Glass and associates (Peacock—lessee)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1927-1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Ledge, Inc. (South Peacock)</td>
<td>Wm. Devlin, President</td>
<td>Dec. 22, 1932</td>
<td>Dec. 1, 1952</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Darland and T.A. Darland (South Peacock)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1940-?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Individuals and companies operating at the Peacock and South Peacock Mines (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Officer</th>
<th>Date Incorporated</th>
<th>Charter Forfeited</th>
<th>Year(s) at Mine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Todd Russell and Jack Darling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(South Peacock)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Mines, Inc.</td>
<td>company does not match</td>
<td>state of</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>any organization of this</td>
<td>incorporation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>name operating in</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otto Russell (Peacock)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1962-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper Ridge Mines, Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1964-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>subsidiary of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Copper Ridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mines, Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct. 21, 1964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for Copper Ridge Mines, U.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Idaho (1977 or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S., Inc.; H. Goudey, Vice</td>
<td></td>
<td>before)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>President</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho Exploration Co.</td>
<td>Harold L. Ryan, Secretary</td>
<td>Aug. 10, 1965</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1965-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canida Copper Mines, Ltd.</td>
<td>operating company</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1966-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for Copper Ridge Mines,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darland and Robbins (Peacock)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1970-1971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1An American Mining Company was operating at the Peacock Mine two decades before a company of that name was incorporated. However, the company incorporated in 1911 also represented the Kleinschmidt interests.

2Information not available in IGS's files.

3Date not known, but last work done on the property by this company (or its representatives) was in 1966.
The discovery of the Belmont Mine to the south in October 1874 attracted prospectors to the area. By the following summer, several other large copper lodes had been discovered. In 1876, Allen sold a quarter interest in his Peacock Mine to Granville Stuart and S.K. Hauser (later a governor of Montana) for $1,500. Hauser sent Isaac I. Lewis to examine the property in 1877. Lewis, a leading businessman in Ketchum, acquired an interest in the property, but sold it in 1886 to Albert Kleinschmidt, a Helena merchant (Wells, 1983). Kleinschmidt’s brother, Reinhold, soon joined him in the venture. The summers of 1886 and 1887 were spent doing testing and exploratory work.

Mining during the summer of 1888 produced a few cars of ore which ran 35-40 percent copper, about $3 in gold, and 6-10 ounces in silver. The ore was packed on horses from the mine to the wagon road at Cuprum, and from there, it was hauled over 100 miles to Weiser (Livingston and Laney, 1920). The first attempts to survey a suitable railroad route began in 1884, but various delays held up construction for over a decade (Wells, 1983). To get around the long trip to Weiser, the Kleinschmidts built a well-graded wagon road (the Kleinschmidt grade) from the mine to a point on the Snake River 2 miles below Homestead, Oregon (Figure 6). The road was built in 1889 and 1890 (Livingston and Laney, 1920) or in 1890 and 1891 (Wells, 1983). The Kleinschmidts planned to haul their ore to the river and take it by boat to Huntington, Oregon, which was about 70 miles away. However, the river was too swift and contained too many rapids (Livingston and Laney, 1920). The steamboat NORMA, built in 1891 to haul the ore, was not capable of doing the job (Wells, 1983).

The mine closed after the failure of the steamboat project. The American Mining Company took over the mine in 1890 or 1891 and reopened it (Livingston and Laney, 1920). The Panic of 1893 lowered copper prices and slowed mining activity for several years (Wells, 1983). After the American Mining Company failed, the property was leased by the Northwest Copper Company in 1896 or 1897. In 1898, Northwest Copper built a smelter at Cuprum to handle the ore from the Peacock.

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1Livingston and Laney (1920) gives this date as 1890 rather than 1891. Since Carrey and others (1979) gives 1891 as the date for the first test of the Norma, the 165-foot vessel (which had a capacity of 300 tons) was probably constructed mostly in 1890 but not completed until 1891. Carrey and others (1979) also note that the Kleinschmidt’s road was completed three months after the Norma’s trial run.

2Other factors may have contributed to this failure. After Albert Kleinschmidt traded his interest in the mine for shares in the American Mining Company, he became involved in years of litigation over control of the company (Carrey and others, 1979).

3This would have occurred in 1891, if Wells’ (1983) date for completion of the road is correct. If Livingston and Laney (1920) give the correct date for completion of the road, either 1890 or 1891 are permissible dates.
Figure 6. View into the Snake River Canyon from Kleinschmidt Grade, 1994. Ore from the Peacock Mine was hauled down this grade to the Snake River below (Idaho Geological Survey photograph by Earl H. Bennett).
Both the company and the smelter failed in the fall, and the mine was again closed (Livingston and Laney, 1920).

Lindgren (1900) visited the district in 1897. At that time, most of the work done on the Peacock claim consisted of an open cut which showed an orebody approximately 35 feet wide. About a thousand tons of ore were shipped to the smelter at Cuprum, and the resulting matte was shipped to Weiser. A 130-foot shaft was sunk on the South Peacock claim in 1897, and about 500 feet of tunnels were driven from the shaft.

The Boston and Seven Devils Company acquired the Peacock, the South Peacock, and several other properties in 1899. The IMIR for the year said the company was "actively developing these properties on a systematic and substantial basis," but after operating the Peacock during 1900 and part of 1901 and removing "a few carloads of good ore" from the South Peacock, this company also failed (Livingston and Laney, 1920). Litigation over ownership of the claims, which included some of the leading mine owners in Montana as principals, closed all the mines in the district in 1902.

In 1904, the Ladd Metals Company moved a 40-ton smelter to Landore. In addition to processing ore from the company's own properties, the smelter purchased ore from other mines in the area. C.W. Jones leased and operated the Peacock during 1904 and 1905 (Livingston and Laney, 1920). In 1904, the smelter purchased 1,280 tons of sorted ore from the Peacock; the ore averaged 16 percent copper, and 4 ounces of silver and $2.70 in gold per ton. Lessees also produced ore from the Peacock in 1905. The ore was tested at Landore, and shipments of higher grade material were made to smelters at Sumpter, Oregon, and Salt Lake City. The 1905 IMIR described the district (p. 131):

The Seven Devils Copper District, forty miles north of Council, contains some very promising gold and silver-bearing copper ore deposits of comparatively high grade.

This district has been badly handicapped since its discovery by title litigation and some of the rankest kind of mining mismanagement. A large amount of capital has been expended on several of the different properties in the camp, but without any definite results in the way of intelligent development. I understand that the titles have all been cleared up, however, and conditions in that respect quieted.

The ores of the district, as far as developed, have proven largely secondary carbonate and oxide varieties, with some high-grade bornite material. They are contained in a very silicious matrix, and several attempts to smelt them and make bullion on the ground have proven unsuccessful, due, however, largely to the attempts to get along without the excessive cost of coke fuel, the cost of which at such a distance from railway transportation being prohibitive.

The principal geological feature of the Seven Devils District is the broad field of massive gray diorite with included belts or zones of marbelized limestone and excessive development of contact metamorphic [sic] minerals, including garnet epidote and associated alteration products.
About the Peacock, the Mine Inspector continued (p. 131-134):

There are two quite distinct classes of deposits, which are illustrated in the accompanying diagram [see Figure 7]. The Old Peacock Mine, three and one-half miles in an air-line north of Landore, is a regular mineral farm at the surface and presents an outcrop of granite and iron gangue richly impregnated with copper carbonates and oxides and containing kidneys of massive bornite ore. This great surface display of mineral is 550 feet long by 80 feet wide and occurs near the head of a flat draw that forms the source of one of the steep gulches that feed a tributary to the Snake River. It presents the appearance of a mammoth warren. It has been gophered over and quarried and worked by day-light stopes in a most irregular manner by leasers gouging after the rich ore.

This whole mass of surface mineral as it stands today is said to average better than seven per cent copper and two or three dollars in gold and silver, and there are several dump piles containing from 100 to 1,000 tons of cobbings from richer mineral of ten per cent ore.

This property was discovered originally by placer miners who made good money working its soft surface through sluice boxes in the early spring when the snow water was flowing, and some handsome coarse gold specimens are reported to have been found by its early operators, associated with the copper mineral.

A shaft was sunk from the highest part of the exposure 150 feet deep, which was tapped at a depth of 75 feet and some irregular stoping of the ore body has been done. The mine has produced a total of 12,000 tons of ore, which, I am reliably informed, has averaged 15 per cent copper, together with about two dollars in gold and eight ounces in silver per ton.

From the adit tunnel that taps this shallow shaft the ore body was tested by diamond drilling. There were three holes put down, one of them 600 feet, another one 500 feet, a third one 400 feet. The latter hole is said to have been in ore all the way. It was pointed at an angle of 20 degrees from the vertical to the southeast, and the cores brought out ore reported to have represented an ore body of much higher grade than the average of the mine above the adit level. The ore encountered is also said to have continued in the same altered condition and should mean that if the development of the mine were extended below the depth represented by the bottom of this 400-foot bore hole a very valuable body of secondary enriched sulphide mineral should be encountered when water level is struck, as an enormous amount of leaching must have occurred in such a width and vertical range of oxide mineral.

There are several other properties along this mineral belt, especially in the vicinity of Landore, that resemble and belong to the same class as the Old Peacock. They seem to occupy the position of the original body of limestone that has been transformed by metamorphic action to silicious contact minerals previously referred to, and copper-iron ore. A notable feature of the associated minerals in these deposits is a pronounced development of specularite, a sparkling, scaly, oxide of iron.

The wall rocks of these deposits are the normal, medium grained gray diorite of the district.

In 1906, the Ladd Metals Company shipped 2,545 of copper ore to the Oregon Smelting and Refining Company’s smelter at Sumpter, Oregon. The ore was from the company’s stockpile and had been mined from the Peacock several years earlier. The ore yielded 148 ounces of gold, 7,283 ounces of silver, and 587,860 pounds of
Figure 7. Generalized cross sections of two types of ore deposits in the Seven Devils region. The upper drawing shows a metamorphosed and mineralized slab of limestone engulfed by diorite, similar to the deposits at the Peacock and South Peacock mines. (Page 132 in Bell, Robert N., 1906, Seventh Annual Report of the Mining Industry of Idaho for the Year 1905.)
copper.

Lessees worked the Peacock in 1907, producing ore from a surface cut. According to the IMIR (p. 204-205):

The most important mining operation of the past year in this field was that of the Peacock mine, which was handled under lease and bond by Mr. George W. Boggs, who mined and shipped 500 tons of 16 per cent copper ore containing in addition several dollars per ton in gold and silver, and while doing so greatly increased the already large reserves of the mine.

The Peacock carries an immense surface gossen of iron and sandy garnet gangue with a rich dissemination of copper carbonate and bornite ore. The bornite occurs in segregated masses that sometimes contain as much as a carload of 30 to 40 per cent copper ore, and the whole mass of gossen outcroppings with creamy bunches gophered out is said to average 6 per cent through the ore shoot.

The formation is gray diorite [sic] and the ore body is probably a replacement of a disconnected body of limestone, for narrow belts of limestone associated with rich copper ore and an excessive development of garnet and other metamorphism minerals occur in repeated outcroppings on the strike of this property to the southwest for several miles.

The Peacock is situated at an elevation of 6,730 feet above sea level, and the canyon slope towards the Snake River falls away from this point at about half pitch, affording magnificent chances for deep crosscut tunnel development. The property makes such a handsome showing at the surface, and at the present shallow development, of comparatively rich average values in copper, as to indicate that its development at depth may afford a bonanza resource of copper mineral that can be shipped crude as mined, when the railway is finished, and a connection made with aerial tram, as it could be reached by a line of that kind to advantage.

The Peacock shipped small amounts of ore in 1908 and 1909. Many of the properties in the district were doing development work in hopes that the railroad would soon be extended into the district, although by 1909, it was only as far as Homestead (Wells, 1983). The 1909 IMIR described the year’s operations as follows (p. 125-126):

The Peacock mine was operated under lease and bond during the early part of the year in a desultory manner with insufficient equipment. It shipped one car of ore containing 15 [per] cent copper but was closed down during the summer and has since been idle. This is one of the most meritorious properties in the Seven Devils district and has a shipping record of several thousand tons of 10 per cent and better copper ore, carrying several dollars per ton in gold and silver. This property has been repeatedly subjected to abortive attempts at development, which have failed to produce profitable results through mismanagement, but with intelligent development at depth is likely to supply large quantities of rich shipping ore. Its surface manifestations present a gossen outcropping 400 to 500 feet long by over 100 feet wide, composed of garnet and associated metamorphic minerals, with copper carbonate and bornite throughout its mass. Extensive diamond drilling operations have been carried on this property in the past that are reported to have disclosed rich sulphide ore bodies at considerable depth. The Peacock has probably had as much capital expended on it as all the other properties of the district.
combined, but 90 per cent of this great outlay has been wasted and the merits and importance of its great surface showing of mineral still remains unproven.

Copper ore was shipped from the South Peacock during 1915, and the Peacock shipped copper ore in 1916. By 1919, the Peacock was credited with having shipped 20,000 tons of ore containing 10 percent copper. This was mostly copper carbonate and hand-picked masses of bornite. Reserves at the mine were said to be 60,000 tons of ore containing 6 percent copper. The IMIR noted that the ore would have to be treated by leaching or used as a siliceous flux. When Livingston and Laney (1920) visited the district in 1919, workings on the Peacock consisted of an open cut 75 feet wide by 150 feet long and a shaft between 250 and 300 feet deep. Workings extending from the shaft included four levels of varying lengths, a number of cross-cuts, a considerable amount of stoping, and a tunnel that connected with the shaft about 75 feet from the bottom. Development on the South Peacock consisted of a 325-foot shaft with levels at 42, 100, 200, and 300 feet. The 100 level had a small amount of cross-cutting, and the 42 level had three short drifts. The length of the workings on the lower levels (if any) was not available.

The Idaho Copper Company, Ltd., acquired a long-term option on the Peacock and Red Ledge properties in 1919, but apparently did no work on the Peacock and allowed the option to lapse within a short time. (The company retained control of the Red Ledge.)

The Idaho Copper Corporation took over the South Peacock in 1925. The company started building a new bunk and boarding house on the property in October and purchased some small equipment toward the end of the year. The mine was in poor condition and required considerable work before it would become operational. The company started underground development work in March 1926 and continued work for the rest of the year. Plans called for driving a connecting tunnel to the Peacock workings. On April 7, 1926, Idaho Copper Corporation merged with Idaho Copper Co., Ltd., on the basis of trading 1¼ shares of Idaho Copper Co., Ltd., for 1 share of Idaho Copper Corporation. Over 98 percent of the stock of the two corporations was exchanged.

In 1927, Idaho Copper Corporation purchased second-hand boilers and a steam-driven compressor and hoist. The equipment was moved to the property and partially installed in a new building. On November 4, all mining operations ceased, and the Idaho Copper Corporation and the Idaho Copper Co., Ltd., were both placed in receivership on November 25. The Boise Association of Credit Men filed the complaint that put the companies into receivership. The complaint alleged disagreements between factions within the companies’ management — the Cooley Butler faction (Idaho Copper Co., Ltd.) and the George Graham Rice faction (Idaho Copper Corporation).

Also in 1927, James Glass and associates of Butte, Montana, obtained a lease
and option on the Peacock Mine. The lessees rebuilt the mine camp, rehabilitated the mine, and conducted development work during the last four months of the year. A small amount of work was also done the following year.

Meanwhile, the saga of the Idaho Copper Corporation continued. On May 19, 1925, the company filed a $100,000 lawsuit against the Idaho Inspector of Mines, Stewart Campbell. The suit alleged that Campbell, while objecting to the company’s promotional methods in the course of his job, had published false, malicious, and defamatory statements against the company. Campbell maintained that the company’s promotional materials contained statements which were "grossly misleading and greatly divergent from the facts" and that it was his duty to warn the public when such advertising was inflated to the point of fraudulently misrepresenting the current condition of the property.

According to the IMIR, the company tried to delay bringing the case to trial and eventually dropped its lawsuit the day before the trial date. At the same time, it filed a new lawsuit, this time for $500,000, adding a new complaint of libel to its charges. This case was heard in October 1926, and the jury found in favor of Campbell. The company sought a new trial, which was denied by the judge. It appealed the decision, but then again (according to the IMIR) tried to delay the proceedings. The U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals finally heard the case at the end of July 1928 and upheld the previous decision. The company again filed for a rehearing, which was denied on October 1, 1928.

At the same time, the U.S. Post Office had been investigating the promotion. On February 27, 1928, it filed charges against George Graham Rice (editor and publisher of the Wall Street Iconoclast, where most of the promotional materials had been published), Walter K. Yourston (organizer and first president of the Idaho Copper Corporation), the Wall Street Iconoclast, the Idaho Copper Corporation, and others. The indictment charged conspiracy to use the mails to defraud the public in the promotion of the stock of the Idaho Copper Corporation. The defendants were found guilty on December 14, 1928. [The IMIR does not make it clear which property was being promoted by this scheme. The Idaho Copper Company, owner of the Red Ledge Mine, was technically a separate legal entity from the Idaho Copper Corporation, the owner of the South Peacock Mine and the Iron Dyke property in Oregon, although the stockholders of the two organizations were virtually identical. All the legal proceedings were against the Idaho Copper Corporation, although Wells (1983) states that the stock promotion scheme involved the Red Ledge, which was supposedly owned by the Idaho Copper Company.]

As a result of the company’s legal difficulties, no work was done at the South Peacock in 1928, and the Idaho Copper Corporation remained in receivership until October 1929. At that time, total development on the property was about 1,300 feet of workings. The 1930 IMIR noted that the property was mortgaged to Cooley Butler.

The American Mining Company, Ltd., owner of the Peacock Mine, allowed
its corporate charter to lapse at the end of 1930, according to the company reports to
the Idaho Inspector of Mines.

In 1932, the stockholders of the Idaho Copper Company (described by the
IMIR as controlling the stock of the Idaho Copper Corporation) petitioned to have the
company placed in receivership; the court granted the request and a Boise attorney
was appointed receiver. Conflicting reports in the 1933 IMIR state that Cooley Butler
obtained either the Idaho Copper Co.'s or the Idaho Copper Corporation's properties
(or possibly both) through a mortgage foreclosure. A "Stockholders' Protective
Committee," incorporated under the name of The Red Ledge, Inc., filed several suits
against Butler. Red Ledge, Inc., stated that it had organized to recover the Idaho
Copper Company's property for its stockholders. Red Ledge reached a settlement in
1934, which apparently did not involve the South Peacock property.

In 1940, John Darland and T.A. Darland purchased the South Peacock from
the county for taxes. They shipped ore sorted from the dump. The Helena claim, one
of the Peacock group, also shipped ore during the year.

Both properties produced ore in 1941 and 1942. The South Peacock shipped
52 tons in 1943 and the Helena shipped 36 tons. In 1945, ore was mined from the
South Peacock, and lessees at both the Helena and the South Peacock shipped ore to a
smelter in Utah in 1947. In 1949, leasing operations at the Helena claim produced 41
tons of ore, and operations at the South Peacock produced 13 tons.

When Cook (1954) visited the district in 1953, he noted that a new shaft, 250
feet southeast of the original shaft, had been started on the South Peacock. The shaft
was 50 feet deep, but the lower 20 feet were flooded, as were the lower workings in
the older shaft. Some ore had been produced from the new shaft, and in 1951 ore was
shipped from the 200 level of the old shaft. Cook made no mention of any work at
the Peacock.

Some ore, possibly from the Peacock, was shipped from the district in 1956.
In 1960, Todd Russell and Jack Darling operated the South Peacock. They sorted the
ore by hand and shipped it to the Tacoma, Washington, smelter.

Western Mines, Inc., operated the Peacock in 1961. The company produced
ore averaging about 17 percent copper and shipped it to Tacoma. Five men were
employed at the open-pit operation.

In 1962, Otto Russell produced 890 tons of ore, containing approximately 106
tons of copper and 3,267 ounces of silver, from the Peacock. The ore was trucked to
Council and shipped by rail to the Tacoma smelter. Russell also worked the mine in
1963, but production from the open-pit was below that of the previous year.

In 1964, Copper Ridge Mines, Ltd. (of Vancouver, British Columbia),
obtained an option on the Peacock and began diamond drilling. After completing the
drilling program in 1965, Copper Ridge turned the Peacock over to Idaho Exploration
Co., which was organized during the year. Idaho Exploration began modifying the
former Alaska tungsten mill at Cuprum to use a leach-precipitation process on the
Peacock's copper oxide ore. Drilling was conducted on the claims in 1966. In 1970 and 1971, Darland and Robbins operated the Peacock.

Total recorded production from the Peacock between 1904 and 1970 (which includes some ore produced from the South Peacock claim) was 12,890 tons of ore. This material yielded 465 ounces of gold, 114,911 ounces of silver, 2,759,405 pounds of copper, 600 pounds of lead, and 400 pounds of zinc. Total production credited to the South Peacock between 1915 and 1951 was 329 tons of ore, which yielded 17 ounces of gold, 1,676 ounces of silver, 109,645 pounds of copper, and 70 pounds of lead. These numbers do not contain any production for the period before 1900. Estimates of production for that period are as much as twice the amount recorded since then. Also, given the complexities of the ownership situation and the number of lawsuits involving the companies operating in the district, it is probable that some of the ore produced by lessees was either not reported or was incorrectly attributed to a mine different from the one where the ore was actually produced.

USBM field studies (Close and others, 1982) reported that the Peacock Mine had 450,000 tons of paramarginal resources containing 1.35 percent copper and 0.7 ounce of silver per ton. The South Peacock had 1,700,000 tons of paramarginal resources containing 1.59 percent copper and 0.56 ounce of silver per ton.

The area around the mine was burned over by the Sawpit fire in 1988. The Peacock was examined by an Idaho Geological Survey geologist in 1994 as part of an evaluation of abandoned and inactive mines in southern Idaho. Figures 8, 9, 10, and 11 show the Peacock workings at that time.
Figure 8. Peacock open pit, 1994 (Idaho Geological Survey photographs by Earl H. Bennett).
Figure 9. Old adit in the wall of the Peacock open pit, 1994 (Idaho Geological Survey photograph by Earl H. Bennett).
Figure 10. East adit of the South Peacock Mine, 1994 (Idaho Geological Survey photograph by Earl H. Bennett).
Figure 11. Shaft in the west workings of the South Peacock Mine, 1994 (Idaho Geological Survey photograph by Earl H. Bennett).
References


Idaho Geological Survey’s mineral property files (includes copies of company reports to the Idaho Inspector of Mines).


Livingston, D.C., and F.B. Laney, 1920, The copper deposits of the Seven Devils and adjacent districts (including Heath, Hornet Creek, Hoodoo, and Deer Creek: Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology Bulletin 1, 105 p.
