

J. A. BOWNOCKER, *State Geologist*

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF OHIO

Volume XI.

Comprising Bulletins 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the
Fourth Series

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To Governor James M. Cox:

DEAR SIR: I transmit herewith Volume XI of the Geological Survey of Ohio, consisting of Bulletins 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the Fourth Series.

These bulletins have already been distributed, and are assembled in this form as provided by statute. By action of the last session of the General Assembly the publication of the bulletins in this form has been discontinued, and therefore this will close the series of volumes.

Respectfully submitted,

J. A. BOWNOCKER, *State Geologist.*

COLUMBUS, OHIO, May 15, 1913.

THE SURVEY IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE PUBLIC.

The usefulness of the Survey is not limited to the preparation of formal reports on important topics. There is a constant and insistent desire on the part of the people to use it as a technical bureau for free advice in all matters affecting the geology or mineral industries of the State. A very considerable correspondence comes in, increasing rather than decreasing in amount, and asking specific and particular questions on points in local geology.

The volume of this correspondence has made it necessary to adopt a uniform method of dealing with these requests. Not all of them can be granted, but some can and should be answered. There is a certain element of justice in the people demanding such information, from the fact that the geological reports issued in former years were not so distributed as to make them accessible to the average man or community today. The cases commonly covered by correspondence may be classified as follows:

1st. Requests for information covered by previous publications.—This is furnished where the time required for copying the answer is not too large. Where the portion desired cannot be copied, the enquirer is told in what volume and page it occurs and advised how to proceed to get access to a copy of the report.

2nd. Requests for identification of minerals and fossils.—This is done, where possible. As a rule the minerals and fossils are simple and familiar forms, which can be answered at once. In occasional cases, a critical knowledge is required and time for investigation is necessary. Each assistant is expected to co-operate with the State Geologist in answering inquiries concerning his field.

3rd. Requests from private individuals for analysis of minerals and ores, and tests to establish their commercial value.—Such requests are frequent. They cannot be granted, however, except in rare instances. Such work should be sent to a commercial chemical laboratory. The position has been taken that the Geological Survey is in no sense a chemical laboratory and testing station to which the people may turn for free analytical work. Whatever work of this sort is done, is done on the initiative of the Survey and not at the solicitation of an interested party.

The greatest misapprehension in the public mind regarding the Survey is on this point. Requests for State aid in determining the value of private mineral resources, ranging from an assay worth a dollar up to drilling a test well costing several thousand dollars, represent extreme cases. At present there is no warrant for the Survey making private tests, even where the applicant is entirely willing to pay for the service. In many cases individuals would prefer the re-

port of a State chemist or State geologist to that of any private expert, at equal cost, because of the prestige which such a report would carry. But it is a matter of doubt whether it will ever be the function of the Survey to enter into commercial work of this character; it certainly will not be unless explicit legal provisions for it are made.

4th. Requests from a number of persons representing a diversity of interests, who jointly ask the Survey to examine into and publicly report upon some matter of local public concern.—Such cases are not common. It is not always easy to determine whether such propositions are really actuated by public interest or not. Each case must be judged on its merits. The Survey will often be prevented from taking up such investigations by the lack of available funds, while otherwise the work would be attempted.

The reputed discovery of gold is one of the most prolific sources of such calls for State examination. It usually seems wise and proper to spend a small sum in preventing an unfounded rumor from gaining acceptance in the public mind, before it leads to large losses and unnecessary excitement. The duty of dispelling illusions of this sort cannot be considered an agreeable part of the work of the Survey, but it is nevertheless of very direct benefit to the people of the State.

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