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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FRED A. SEATON, SECRETARY

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION:

Black Hawk Mercury Mine  
Nye County, Nevada

George H. Holmes, Jr.

Bureau of Mines

January 27, 1969

## INTRODUCTION

The Black Hawk mercury mine in eastern Nye County, Nevada, adjacent to the Lincoln County border, was examined on October 16, 1958 by an engineer<sup>1/</sup> from the Bureau of Mines. The property consists of a group of 17 claims in sec. 13, T. 2 S., R. 53 E., M. D. B. & M., Queen City mining district, about 78 miles by road southeast of Tonopah, the county seat of Nye County located on U. S. Highways 6 and 95.

To reach the property from Tonopah, travel northeast on U. S. Highway 6 for 52 miles to Warm Springs; turn right and go 46 miles southeast on State Highway 25. At this point an ungraded road extends north about 1/4 mile to the mine.

## OWNERSHIP

The 17 Black Hawk claims are owned by Mrs. Hazel Mellan,  
P. O. Box 766, Fallon, Nevada

## HISTORY

Cinnabar was discovered in the area during 1929 and seven claims were located by J. Mellan. During 1930-35 the mine was worked intermittently with an output of about 70 flasks of mercury. The inclined shaft was sunk, drifts extended on two levels, and some stoping done. Sporadic activity during 1936-43 and 1955-57 was unproductive. Property holdings have been increased to 17 claims. No activity was in progress during 1958.

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<sup>1/</sup> George H. Holmes, Jr., Mining Engineer, Reg. II, Reno, Nevada

## PHYSICAL FEATURES

The Black Hawk claims are located along the foothills at the south end of the Julian Canyon Mountains, adjacent to the north boundary of the Las Vegas Bombing and Gunnery Range, in an area of moderate relief. Elevations range from 5,500 to 6,000 feet. A semi-arid climate prevails with hot, dry summers and moderately cold winters. Annual precipitation is light, occurring principally in winter snows and spring rains. Vegetation comprises the usual desert plants and shrubs.

No transmitted electric power is available; the nearest transmission line is at Tom Plute, about 15 airline miles southeast of the property. Water for mine and domestic use can be obtained from valley wells.

Tomopah, Nevada, 98 miles by road to the northwest, is the nearest labor and supply source. Telephones, telegraph, truck-transport, and airline facilities are available there.

## LABOR AND LIVING CONDITIONS

No labor is available locally. Miners and heavy equipment operators can be recruited at Tomopah. Current wages for this class of labor ranges from \$2.00 to \$2.50 hourly with overtime paid for work in excess of 40 hours weekly.

One cabin is on the property. The remote location of the mine would make it necessary for an operator to build additional cabins or maintain a trailer camp.

#### GEOLOGY AND ORE DEPOSITS

The predominant formation in the mine area is a flow of highly altered andesite crossed by a series of narrow, northerly-trending, steeply west dipping shears. Cinnabar is sparsely and erratically distributed along the shears; principal production was from one of the more prominent shear zones in which cinnabar occurs as thin veinlets along fractures and isolated bunches and irregular disseminations throughout the zone. Mineralization extends to comparatively shallow depths. The tenor of the mineralized material is generally low, ranging from 3 to 5 pounds mercury per ton. Local concentrations of higher grade material were selectively mined and handsorted to provide retort-grade ore.

#### MINE WORKINGS

Principal mine workings, largely inaccessible, include a 45-foot inclined shaft, levels at 22- and 45 feet, short drifts on both levels, and several small stopes. A stope broken through to surface from the 22-foot level is about 25 feet long and 4 feet wide. In addition to the underground openings, numerous shallow trenches and open cuts have been excavated along the mineralized zones.

## **PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

### **Black Hawk Mercury Mine Nye County, Nevada**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Black Hawk mercury mine in eastern Nye County, Nev., about 98 miles southeast of Tonopah, comprises 17 claims along the south end of the Quinn Canyon Mountains adjacent to the northern boundary of the Las Vegas Bombing and Gunnery Range. Cinnabar occurs erratically along northerly-trending, westerly dipping shears in highly altered andesite. Exploitation of one of the more prominent shear zones yielded a small amount of mercury. No production has been made since 1935.

The mineralized shear zone is developed by a 45-foot inclined shaft, short drifts on the 22- and 45-foot levels, and several small stopes. Work indicated low grade material extending to relatively shallow depths which was selectively mined and handsorted to make a retort-grade product.

The shear zones are small and limited in extent, and it is doubtful if further work could develop reserves adequate to support a small-scale highgrading operation. The amount of work necessary in relation to the tonnage that could be developed is not justified under current mercury prices.

**No further consideration by the Bureau of Mines is recommended.**