

Asbestos Production Useless

Editor's Note: The following article and letters appeared in the June 30, 1927 issue of the Flathead Monitor under the headline "Says Libby Asbestos Deposit Not Commercially Valuable."

To the Stockholders of The Zonolite Company:

So much publicity has been recently given the occurrence of amphibole asbestos in the Kootenai Creek mining district in which our Zonolite deposit is located and we have had requests from so many of our stockholders for information regarding this mineral that we are taking this method of informing them concerning it.

Since first locating the mineral claims which comprised the nucleus of the Zonolite holdings the occurrence of the amphibole has been known. Many years ago samples were submitted to various asbestos companies for inspection and reports as to its commercial value and applications. Until a short time ago the last investigations that were made in connection with this mineral were in the fall of 1925. The advices received then were not encouraging. Continued reports, however, within the next few months from various sources that this mineral was of commercial value prompted us to make further investigation. The following letter, together with samples of the amphibole in a clean, pure form were submitted to, not only various asbestos producing concerns, but to manufacturers of asbestos products who are pro-

the freight rate as we assume that freight tariffs are already established on all grades of asbestos.

Very truly yours,
The Zonolite Company.

Not Feasible

We are quoting some of the replies received to this inquiry: "We are in receipt of yours of June 8th, together with sample of Amphibole Asbestos.

"We regret to advise you that there is absolutely no market for this kind of asbestos and we would advise you not to spend any money in developing this deposit. This type of asbestos is very common throughout the entire United States, but it has practically no commercial value." (By C. Bindman, Secy-Mgr., Keashey and Mattison Company, Ambler, Penn.)

"We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th inst., together with sample of Amphibole Asbestos, and in response would say that we have no use for Amphibole Asbestos and we are, therefore, not interested." (By F. G. Kelly, Keashey and Mattison Company, Ambler, Penn.)

"Replying to yours of the 8th, in reference to amphibole asbestos, would advise you that we are not in the market for any of this material; in fact, we have never been able to use this grade of asbestos in the manufacture of any of our products." (By W. F. Smith, Vice President, John-Manville Cor-



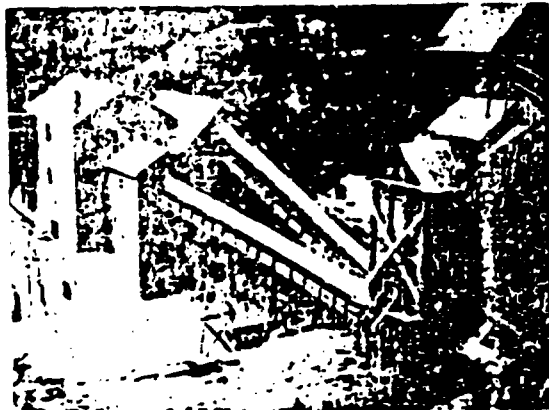
LIBBY'S OPEN PIT—In 1934, mining at the Zonolite site was done by pick and hand shovel. The Universal Insulation Company was mining underground, the Zonolite Company worked the open pit. Facilities at the site were at a minimum. (Photo courtesy the Zonolite Company.)

and as a consequence can only be used as a filler. In this use it competes with diatomaceous earth and chalk which are at low priced that there could be no profit in attempting to exploit the amphibole. Current quotations on chalk from trade journals, such as the Engineer and Mining Journal-Press, are four dollars and seventy-five cents to five dollars per ton, laid down in New York. Freight rates alone on the Amphibole would range from fifteen to twenty dollars per ton in car lots to Chicago and eastern markets with higher proportionate rates to the west. Amphibole asbestos occurs

generally throughout the mountain regions of the United States. On the Colville reservation west of Spokane, the country formation is mostly composed of amphibole, as the Newhart district and Great Falls, it is very abundant and in the mountains near Casper, Wyoming, it comprises a large part of the formation.

The Zonolite Company

(The experts were right back in 1927. The Zonolite Company still does not use its deposits of Amphibole Asbestos, for many of the same reasons given back in the '20's.)



COMPANIES MERGE—In 1939, the Universal Insulation Company and the Zonolite Company merged. The Zonolite Company had no milling facilities and now the entire mountain was available for processing through the Universal Insulation Company mill. The new company was the Universal Zonolite Insulation Company. This name was changed in 1948 to Zonolite Company. The picture above shows the mill that was in existence at the time of the 1939 merger. (Photo courtesy the Zonolite Company.)

chasers of asbestos on the operation. Asbestos Limited, 8 en market as well as brokers West 40th Street, New York, handling asbestos for sale to manufacturers and jobbers:

"Gentlemen:

Inclosed, herewith, a small sample of Amphibole asbestos.

"In developing our Zonolite

"We have your letter of the 8th with sample of amphibole asbestos.

"We are not interested in this material for the reason that

Five Libby Families Evacuated During Kootenai River Flood of 1948

Montana floods are a common springtime phenomenon. This spring flood and Big Timber were hit. In 1948, Libby was the hapless victim. That spring, the Kootenai River spilled over its banks and surrounded most homes in East Libby. Most of the basements in the business and residential district were full of water.

Five Libby Families Evacuated

Five Libby families were now out of their homes and given emergency housing at the Red Cross quarters in the Libby School House, according to the Red Cross Disaster Chairman that year, Don Hargreaves. Hargreaves also estimated that seven to ten additional families left their homes during the flood.

The Kootenai River reached its highest crest, 18.5 feet, on Friday, May 22, and within a week had receded to 15 feet.

Rail service to Spokane was cut off for two weeks when the Kootenai River and its tributaries washed out sections of the Great Northern line.

tracks to gas trucks as a precautionary measure. Several residents feared the floods would destroy the storage tanks, so the fuel was moved to prevent a shortage.

Forest Service officials estimated that it would take two years to get all roads and bridges back to pre-flood condition because of insufficient funds. The swamped bridge near the Kootenai Falls was torn from its moorings. But children didn't worry about these grown-up problems. They enjoyed the disaster, swimming down Second Street between the canals.

A week after the flood, Dr. James M. Cairns, City Health Officer, warned of the possibility of intestinal infections and typhoid "resulting from the use of the waters that were contaminated by the recent flood waters."

"If residents have been using any water for cooking or drinking other than approved city water supplies, they are urged to come into either the office of

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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