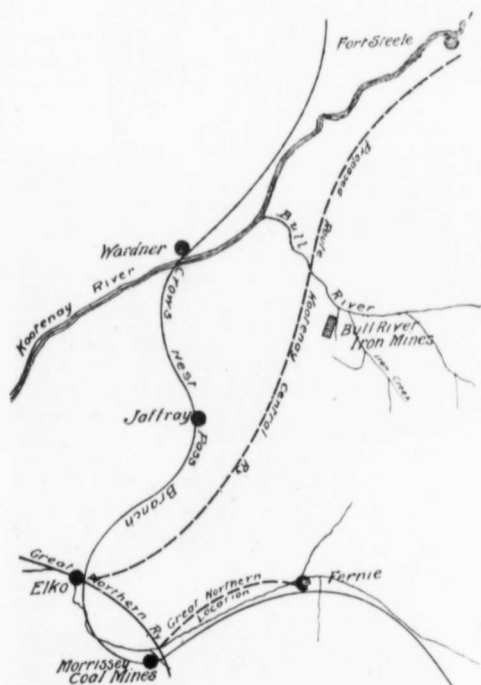


THE BULL RIVER IRON MINES.

(By C. Hungerford Pollen, F.G.S., M.A.I.M.E.)

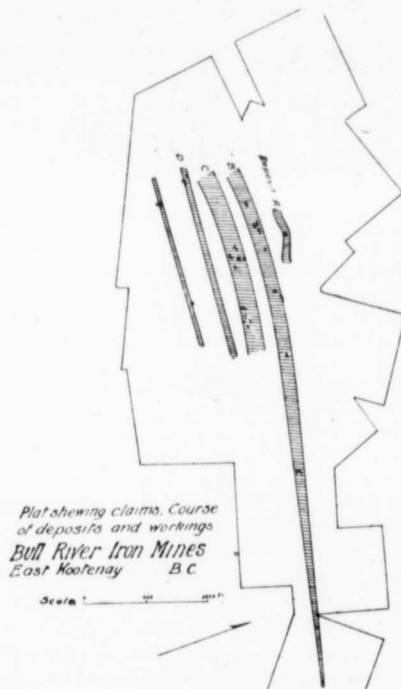
It is a matter, not merely of individual, but of national importance whether pig iron or steel can be profitably produced in British Columbia. There must always be a beginning. The value of a commodity must be governed in the end by the cost of its production. The position in Bull River is a striking one when the estimated costs of production are compared with that of steel produced in the United States.



It should be remembered that the costs of transportation are a diminishing item. As railways do more business, improve and extend their lines, and have return freight to haul, they can give cheaper rates. The users of the product too come to the source of supply as an industry increases in magnitude instead of waiting for it to be brought to them. We have already seen in East Kootenay the vindication of the long neglected coal fields. These were considered too far from transportation and for many years hung fire as an enterprise. It was the same too with the great lead mines of the North Star and the St. Eugene, the latter being now proved to be the second largest lead mine on the American Continent. It seems only a matter of time before other commodities, for which the raw material exists in great quantities in East Kootenay, are exploited on a commercial basis. Vast deposits of low-grade material are, like the coal areas, situated on tributaries of the Kootenay

River, hence the point of assembly for fluxes, fuel and raw material is in each case down hill. The building of the Kootenay Central Railway, which seems now a certainty, will give special advantages in the making of a great centre for the reduction and refining of metals. Deposits of various kinds such as manganese that have hitherto been considered of no commercial value whatever seem destined to become great assets to the wealth of the country.

The property in question is known as the Bull River Iron Mines and is situated on Fenwick Mountain eighteen miles from Fort Steele. The distances to existing railway points are to Jaffray and Wardner on the C. P. R., nine and five miles respectively; Elko on the Great Northern Railway, twenty miles. Good waggon roads connect with these places at present but the route of the proposed Kootenay Central Railway passes immediately below the claims at the foot of Fenwick Mountain and will be within convenient reach of a tramway. The elevation of the claims is 6,000 feet above sea level and 2,500 above Bull River which encircles two sides of Fenwick Mountain. The extent of the property is about nine hundred acres. The base of the mountain is composed of slates, shales and quartzites of Cambrian Age. Above these and in-



cluding the deposits the formation is Devonian-Carboniferous. The deposits occur in a limestone which is in places dolomitic and which has a general strike of northeast and southwest with a north-easterly dip.