

# British Guiana – Colonial Geological Surveys 1947-1956

From Earthwise

[Jump to navigation](#) [Jump to search](#)

From Dixey, F. 1957. [Colonial Geological Surveys 1947-1956: a review of progress during the past ten years](#). Colonial geology and mineral resources. Bulletin supplement No. 2. London: HMSO.



Scenes from British Guiana. Important development work is being carried out in the N.W. District of British Guiana by the African Manganese Co. (Mines Management) Ltd. The photo immediately above shows a trial working face in manganese ore. Plate XIX.

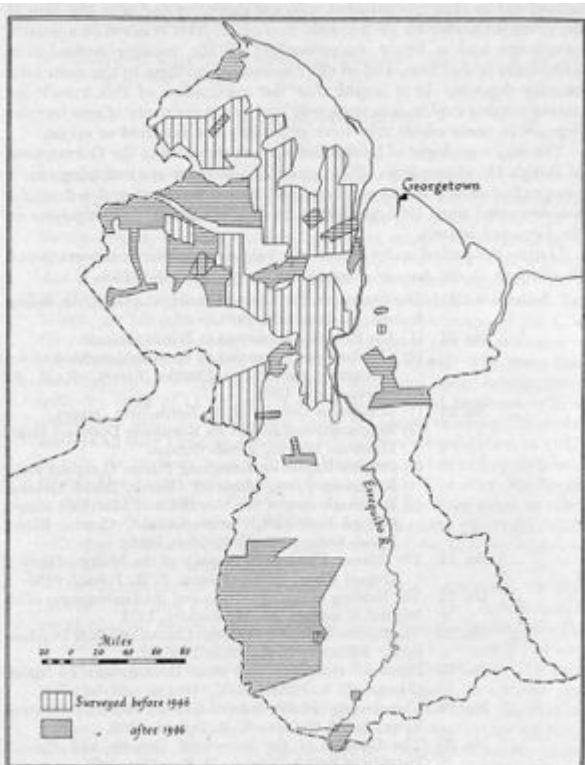


Manganese mining, British Guiana. Manganese-ore mining-camp under construction in the N.W. District of British Guiana. Photo by courtesy: African Manganese Co. (Mines Management) Ltd. Plate XX.



[Photos by courtesy: African Manganese Co. (Mines Management) Ltd.]

Manganese mining, British Guiana. Mouth of No. 2 adit, N.W. District of British Guiana, showing lens of solid primary manganese ore in bedrock. Photo by courtesy: African Manganese Co. (Mines Management) Ltd. Plate XX.



Mapping by the Geological Survey of British Guiana before and after 1946. Text-fig. 14.

## British Guiana

The first systematic geological survey of British Guiana was carried out by C. B. Brown and J. G. Sawkins between the years 1867 and 1873, when they produced the first geological map of the country based on information gathered during traverses of all the principal rivers. The late Sir John Harrison started work on a more detailed examination of the rocks and soils when, in 1889, he was

appointed Government Analyst and Geologist. He continued this work until his death in 1926, and was assisted in his surveys by others, especially C. W. Anderson, H. J. Perkins and E. E. Winter. Harrison's best-known works are "The Geology of the Gold Fields of British Guiana" and "The Katamorphism of Igneous Rocks under Humid Tropical Conditions ". A number of other reports were also published describing the chemical and mineral composition of rocks and also the geology of the various districts of the Colony. Three geological maps were published under the direction of Harrison in 1908, 1913 and 1924.

In 1925, H. J. C. Conolly was appointed Economic Geologist and worked with the assistance of Mr. S. Bracewell. Conolly described the geology of the diamond fields of the Mazaruni. The more detailed geological reconnaissance mapping of British Guiana commenced by Conolly was continued by S. Bracewell, D. R. Grantham, D. W. Bishopp, D. A. Bryn-Davies and G. J. Williams. From 1925 until 1947 a great deal of geological mapping was carried out, and many areas were prospected in detail. Among the more notable mineral deposits examined were the gold deposits of Oko, Quartzstone, Aranka, Aremu, Groete Creek and the North-West District, and the diamantiferous areas in many parts of the Cuyuni and Mazaruni Rivers, the Pakaraima Mountains and the Ireng River.

The work of the Geological Survey was an important factor leading to the activities of British Guiana Consolidated Goldfields, and interest in bauxite deposits dates from Harrison's first recognition of the occurrence of this mineral in the Demerara area in 1910. Other important minerals studied in detail were columbite, lateritic ironstone, and manganese. The coastal deposits and artesian water supply were also investigated.

Long before 1947 it was obvious that British Guiana was rich in mineral deposits and the geology of the Colony suggested that there were great potentialities which would justify more intensive field mapping and prospecting than had hitherto been possible. There was every possibility that a larger Geological Survey Department would be a powerful factor in hastening the development of the interior. A series of development schemes was therefore carried into effect with the aid of grants from the Central Allocation for Geological Surveys from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds and a small contribution from the Colony's funds, and thus the Geological Survey Department was expanded. Mr. S. Bracewell remained Director until 1952, and was succeeded by Mr. G. M. Stockley who had formerly been Director of the Geological Survey Department of Tanganyika. Mr. Stockley retired from the Directorship in 1956.

In 1946 the staff consisted of 1 director, 1 senior geologist, and 1 geologist. In 1956 the authorised establishment was 1 director, 1 senior geologist and 9 geologists. Under a recently approved scheme the staff authorised will be 1 director, 1 deputy director, 3 senior geologists, and 13 geologists.

As a result of the expansion after 1948, the original policy of geological mapping and prospecting continued at an accelerated pace. Mapping was extended in the Cuyuni and Mazaruni river basins, in the Pakaraima Mountains and in the bauxite areas of the coastal plains. The bulletins on the coastal sediments and bauxite deposits were revised. Iron ore deposits received further attention, and additional manganese deposits were discovered which soon attracted the attention of a major mining company. During the last few years of the period 1947-1956, the number of mining companies operating in British Guiana increased sharply, due in no small measure to the activities of the Geological Survey Department.

Recent investigations of the coastal plain in the Berbice District, carried out in close co-operation with soil surveyors and with the help of the newly-available air photographs and maps, have resulted in a greater knowledge and a better understanding of the younger sedimentary formations of this area, and of the relationship of these to the associated bauxite deposits. It is hoped that the application of this knowledge during coming exploration work will lead to the discovery of new

bauxite deposits in areas where they were previously not expected to occur.

The senior geologist of British Guiana was seconded to the Government of British Honduras from 1950 until 1956, to carry out mapping and a prospecting survey in the southern half of that country, and a geologist was seconded from 1951 until 1956 to conduct similar investigations in the Leeward Islands.

**During the period under review the following publications were issued in addition to the Annual Reports for the years 1947-1955:**

Bulletin No. 21 The Geology of the Aurora District, Cuyuni River, British Guiana. S. Bracewell, 1949.

Bulletin No. 22 (1) The Roraima Formation in British Guiana.

Bulletin No. 22 (2) The Roraima Formation in the Neighbourhood of the Kamarang and Upper Ekereku Rivers. P. H. A. Martin-Kaye, 1952.

Bulletin No. 23 (1) Manganese Deposits of the North-West District.

Bulletin No. 23 (2) Reconnaissance Report on Kurupung Diamond Field. Mazaruni District, British Guiana.

Bulletin No. 23 (3) Progress Report on Kurupung Placers Company Ltd., Kurupung River, Mazaruni District, British Guiana.

Bulletin No. 23 (4) Reconnaissance of the Alex Hill and Mad Kiss Mines, Cuyuni Goldfields, Aurora District, Cuyuni River, British Guiana. B. N. Webber, 1952.

Bulletin No. 24 The Diamond and Gold Deposits of the Mekuru District, Cuyuni River, British Guiana. E. R. Pollard, 1953.

Bulletin No. 25 The Geology of British Guiana and the Development of its Mineral Resources. G. M. Stockley, 1955.

Bulletin No. 26 The Bauxite Resources of British Guiana and their Development. Edited by E. R. Pollard, 1955.

Bulletin No. 28 Diamond Resources and their Development in British Guiana. E. R. Pollard, 1956. (*Not yet published.*)

Bulletin No. 29 The Geology of the Issineru-Enachu District, Mazaruni River, British Guiana. E. R. Pollard, 1956.

Bulletin No. 30 The Geology of the Superficial Deposits and Coastal Deposits of British Guiana. D. Bleackley, 1956.

Bulletin No. 31 The Geology of the Otomung District, Cuyuni River, British Guiana. E. R. Pollard, 1956.

**Mineral resources**

Pamphlet No. 1 Report on the Lateritic Ironstone in the Blue Mountains, Lower Essequibo, B.G.

Pamphlet No. 2 Report on Columbite in the Lower Puruni, by F. Whyte. No. 3 Report on Lateritic

Iron Deposits at Iron and Wamara Mountains, by D. M. McBeath and C. N. Barron.

Pamphlet No. 4 Report on Lateritic (Iron) Deposits in Tiger Hill, Demerara River, by C. N. Barron.

Pamphlet No. 6 Monazite in the Rupununi Area, British Guiana, by R. A. Dujardin, 1955.

Pamphlet No. 7 Report on Banka Drilling, Cuyuni River, by P. B. H. Bailey, 1955.

### **Geological Maps [not accompanied by reports]**

Sheet C 4, Kariakau area, North-West District.

## **Mineral occurrences**

Bauxite

Columbite

Diamonds

Gold

Iron and iron ores

Manganese

Water supply

## **British Guiana – Staff list**

*Geological Survey Department, Brickdam, Georgetown*

### **Director**

R. B. McConnell, M.A., D. es Sc. (Lausanne), D.Phil., F.G.S., M.I.M.M.

### **Deputy Director**

C. G. Dixon, B.Sc., F.G.S.

### **Senior Geologists**

P. H. A. Martin-Kaye, B.Sc., A.R.C.S., F.G.S. <sup>[1]</sup>

P. B. H. Bailey, M.A., F.G.S.

D. Bleackley, M.A., F.G.S.

### **Geologists**

C. N. Barron, B.A.

R. T. Cannon, B.Sc., F.G.S.

R. A. Dujardin, B.Sc., F.G.S.

P. I. Morris, B.Sc., F.G.S.

### **Assistant Geologist**

M. W. Carter, B.Sc.

### **Scientific Assistant**

D. O. Pollard

1. [↑](#) Seconded to the Windward Islands

Retrieved from

'[http://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php?title=British\\_Guiana\\_-\\_Colonial\\_Geological\\_Surveys\\_1947-1956&oldid=42963](http://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php?title=British_Guiana_-_Colonial_Geological_Surveys_1947-1956&oldid=42963)'

Category:

- [History of the British Geological Survey](#)

## **Navigation menu**

### **Personal tools**

- Not logged in
- [Talk](#)
- [Contributions](#)
- [Log in](#)
- [Request account](#)

### **Namespaces**

- [Page](#)
- [Discussion](#)

### **Variants**

### **Views**

- [Read](#)
- [Edit](#)
- [View history](#)
- [PDF Export](#)

## More

## Search

## Navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Random page](#)
- [Help about MediaWiki](#)

## Tools

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)
- [Special pages](#)
- [Permanent link](#)
- [Page information](#)
- [Cite this page](#)
- [Browse properties](#)

- This page was last modified on 29 September 2019, at 09:44.

- [Privacy policy](#)
- [About Earthwise](#)
- [Disclaimers](#)

