

Garland Peyton (1892-1964)



Garland Peyton

Garland Peyton died suddenly in the late evening of October 18, 1964.

He was born at Mt. Airy, Habersham County, Georgia, on October 2, 1892. His father, John Thomas Peyton, served as a member of the House of Representatives and Senate between 1902 and 1914. Captain Peyton began first to learn about procedures of State Government as a page in the Georgia Assembly when he was a small boy.

In 1914 he was graduated with the B.S. and E.M. degrees from the School of Mines, North Georgia College (State University System) at Dahlonega, Georgia. He did post-graduate work at Ohio State University in 1926, and under Dr. W. H. Emmons at the University of Minnesota in 1930. He was Mining Engineer with the U. S. Mining, Smelting and Refining Company 1914-1917, and served as 1st Lieutenant, Infantry, U. S. Army, 1917-19.

He became Director of the School of Mines, North Georgia Agricultural College in 1919 and remained in this capacity until 1929. After that date the Mining Department was abandoned, and he became Research Engineer with the Tennessee Copper Company from 1929-31.

He was a Captain in the U. S. Army 1933-37, and was appointed State Mining Engineer, Division of Mines, Mining and Geology July, 1937. In 1938, he became Director of the Department of Mines, Mining and Geology, the position he held for more than 26 years until the time of his death. Captain Peyton served as Director longer than any other man. November 1964 was the 75th Anniversary of the Georgia Geological Survey.

Among numerous special topics of the mining field his interests in mining and smelting of sulphide ores were promoted by experiences in mining and mine safety engineering in California, and later as Research Engineer for the Tennessee Copper Company.

His lifelong interest in gold and gold mining dates from early training at Dahlonega. He became adept at mapping, sampling, and evaluating gold deposits, and made extensive studies in Lumpkin and White Counties, Georgia. Much of the interest in Georgia gold deposits was fostered by his sound and ready advice and his enthusiastic encouragement. He was an excellent chemist and an expert assayer, and became one of the leading authorities on gold and gold mining in the eastern part of the country.

As Director he was notable for his consideration of all affairs per-

taining to the Department which he did much to build up and strengthen. He was particularly active in cooperating with the United States Geological Survey. In continuing and expanding water studies which the State now finds to be of such value in these times of population increase and industrial development, also, for years the Department has cooperated with the Topographic Branch of the U. S. Geologic Survey so that accurate maps drawn to modern scales are available for industrial development, and to serve as modern base maps for geologic work.

The "Captain" endeared himself to all his employees by his kindness and personal interest in them. All visitors, great or small, had ready access to his office for assistance and advice upon a wide variety of mineral and industrial problems. There were those who came poor and in need who left with some small financial help, and such debts he always promptly forgot. He had some enemies, and who is there who has not, but his were always self-appointed and were quickly disarmed by his generous desire to be of help to them as soon as opportunity permitted.

Much of his life was given in the service of his State, resulting in many papers upon mining and mineral resources of Georgia. He was a Fellow of the Geological Society of America, American Institute of Mechanical Engineers, Society of Economic Geologists, American Association of Petroleum Geologists, and also a member of other State and National scientific organizations. He was especially interested in the Association of American State Geologists, and was President in 1948. He would always return from these meetings with many stories about his friends, and with additional ideas for the Departmental program.

A. S. Furcron
January, 1965