

Fayette W. "Fay" Libbey, 1882-1979

Fayette Wilmott Libbey, mining engineer and former State Geologist of Oregon, passed away on November 2, 1979.

He was born in Macwahoc, Maine, and grew up in Bangor, Maine. He was graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1906 with a degree in mining engineering. He came to Oregon in 1935 as a geologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and became the Department's first mining engineer when this agency was created in 1937 by the Oregon Legislature. "Mr. Libbey," as he was usually called by the Department staff, served as director of the agency from 1944 until his retirement in 1954.

It was Libbey's insight and support for exploration that led to the discovery of large areas of ferruginous bauxite in northwestern Oregon. Under his directorship, the Department also investigated and produced publications on coal prospects in the Medford and Coos Bay areas, assessments of potential of the Oregon King Mine in Jefferson County and the Alameda Mine in Josephine County, and the early gold mining activities in Oregon.

He received special honors upon his retirement from the Governor of Oregon and the Oregon section of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers. His service to the Department and the State of Oregon covered almost four decades.

Vernon C. Newton, Jr.