

# Chaffee County

## Turret District

The Turret District, also known as the Turret Creek District, lies in southeastern Chaffee County, about ten miles north of Salida. The District is centered on Turret Gulch stretching from just west of Cameron Mountain near the Park County line, east down Railroad Gulch to the Arkansas River. The terrain is rugged and largely inaccessible, except for a few good gravel roads. The settlement of Turret sits in the middle of the district, founded in 1897 as Camp Austin (Aldrich, 1992).

Gold was the main attraction in the Turret District and production lasted until 1939. Vanderwilt (1947) reported minor production from the district of gold, silver and copper from one or two mines in the years 1932 to 1941. Albite (soda feldspar) was extracted at the Homestake Mine from 1934 until 1949, and began major production in 1953 (Bhutta, 1954). Albite production continued until 1963, along with some minor mica production (Franz, 1963).

Mineral deposits of several different types occur within the Turret District, reflecting the diversity and complexity of the geology. Gold occurs in quartz veins throughout the district (Bhutta, 1954; Wallace, et al, 1997; Wallace & Lawson, 1998). Boardman (1971) recognized that these veins occurred in the Paleozoic rocks. The Gold Bug and Golden Wonder Mines fall into that classification (Bhutta, 1954).

Pegmatites are a notable feature of the Turret District, occurring sporadically through its length. Largest was the Homestake Mine (or "Albite Mine" of Bhutta), but Hanley, et al, 1950, named also the Combination, the Last Chance, the Riegel, the Mica-Beryl and the Rock King.

Just like the Cleora, the Maysville segment of the Garfield-Monarch District, and the Sedalia Mine, the Turret District contains metamorphosed sulfide deposits in Precambrian rocks. Bhutta recognized the Independence Mine as occurring in the local augen gneiss and the Copper King in a gneiss. Heinrich (1981) described the Independence Mine, the Ace High - Jackpot Prospect in Railroad Gulch, and the Copper King mines in his review of skarn deposits in Colorado. As in those other named locations in Colorado of similar deposits, these display a complex mineralogy. Assemblages of -biotite-quartz-actinolite and cordierite with chalcopyrite, pyrite, molybdenite, gahnite and magnetite are described at the Independence. The Ace High - Jackpot contains amphibolite and a skarn of actinolite, anthophyllite, apatite, biotite, calcite, chlorite, cummingtonite, gahnite, phlogopite, quartz, phene, talc, tremolite, zoisite, magnetite and chalcopyrite. Supergene alteration of the copper-rich amphibolite contains malachite, chalcocite, azurite, chrysocolla, brochantite, chalcantite, calcite, barite, opal and psilomelane.

<a href="#">Amphibole</a>	<a href="#">calcite</a>	<a href="#">gahnite</a>	<a href="#">psilomelane</a>
<a href="#">actinolite</a>	<a href="#">chalcantite</a>	<a href="#">garnet</a>	<a href="#">pyrite</a>
<a href="#">anthophyllite</a>	<a href="#">chalcocite</a>	<a href="#">magnetite</a>	<a href="#">quartz</a>
<a href="#">apatite</a>	<a href="#">chalcopyrite</a>	<a href="#">malachite</a>	<a href="#">talc</a>
<a href="#">azurite</a>	<a href="#">chlorite</a>	<a href="#">molybdenite</a>	<a href="#">tremolite</a>
<a href="#">barite</a>	<a href="#">chrysocolla</a>	<a href="#">opal</a>	<a href="#">zoisite</a>
<a href="#">biotite</a>	<a href="#">cordierite</a>	<a href="#">phene</a>	
<a href="#">brochantite</a>	<a href="#">cummingtonite</a>	<a href="#">phlogopite</a>	

Boardman (1971) recognized the possibility that the protoliths of the Precambrian deposits were volcanic-sedimentary rocks. Sheridan and Raymond (1984) finally hypothesized the connection that these Precambrian deposits are actually metamorphosed seafloor exhalative deposits, which were being studied intensively in Canada and Australia at about that time.

Del Rio (1960) describes in addition to these types of deposits, a graphite deposit two miles north of Turret, a vermiculite deposit, and marble northeast of Turret. The Calumet Iron Mine has been considered to occur within the Turret District, and may well, although that mine will be treated individually. Likewise, the Sedalia Mine has been considered a part of the Turret District. While it does occur in Precambrian rocks like those in the Turret District, so do the mines of the Cleora District. Rather than combine them all because of similar geology, this description maintains the geographic distinction and will treat them all separately.

#### References:

[Mineral Resource Data System \(MRDS\) - Online Spatial Data - Turret District](#)

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Franz, C.A., Jr., 1963, Colorado Bureau of Mines Annual Report; Denver, CO.

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Sheridan, Douglas M. and Raymond, William H., 1984, Precambrian Deposits of Zinc-Copper-Lead Sulfides and Zinc Spinel (Gahnite) in Colorado; U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1550.

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Wallace, C.A. and Lawson, Allison D., 1998, Geologic Map of the Cameron Mountain Quadrangle, Chaffee, Park, and Fremont Counties, Colorado; Colorado Geological Survey OFR 98-4.

- [Turret District Mines](#)
  - [Ace High - Jackpot Prospect](#)
  - [American Flag Mine \(Anaconda Mine; Ethel Consolidation Mine; Crete Mine; Holdredge Mine\)](#)
  - [Azurite No. 1 claim](#)
  - [Blackjack Group](#)
  - [Blue Brute and Sevilla Queen claims](#)
  - [Buckley Hill](#)
  - [Calumet Mine \(Calumet; Calumet No. 2; Hecla; Hecla No. 2; Calumet Iron Mine; Calumet-Hecla-Smithville Magnetite Deposit; Patented Placer Claims: Calumet; Hecla-Williamson; Smithville No. 2; CF&I Company Mine\)](#)
  - [Coffey Pot Claims](#)
  - [Combination Prospect \(Allard Beryllium Prospect\)](#)
  - [Copper King Mine \(E.W.; Turret Deposit\)](#)
  - [Corundum Knob](#)
  - [Dangerfield](#)
  - [Doyle Quarry](#)
  - [Friend Claims](#)
  - [Glenn Lamberg Feldspar Deposit](#)
  - [Gold Bug mine](#)
  - [Golden Island](#)
  - [Golden Wonder Mine](#)
  - [Herskberger Tunnel](#)
  - [Homestake Mine](#)
  - [Independence Mine](#)
  - [Iron King Hematite Deposit \(Hawkins Hematite Bank; Lucky Break; Iron King Gold Mine; Iron King Mine\)](#)
  - [Liberty Hill Mine \(Walter Higham's Mine\)](#)
  - [Lucky John No. 2 Mine](#)
  - [M and W](#)
  - [Mascot](#)
  - [Mica-Beryl Mine \(MRDS - 10013705\)](#)
  - [Midwest](#)
  - [Nutmeg](#)
  - [Old Glory claim \(Last Chance prospect; Last Chance Spar-Mica Dyke prospect\)](#)
  - [Riegel Feldspar prospect](#)

