



### Wyoming Leads In Production Of Bentonite

year's larger operation of foundries and steel mills and other industrial plants will be maintained. Few foundries are being built and many castings are being made for tanks, but there is some shifting from cast metal to rolled metal and this consumption by this branch of industry may have reached a peak.

Noted as an 'unfettered factor' affecting Wyoming bentonite is the possibility that increased railroad freight rates on the lower main place other things equal to factory operations in steeper competition with bentonite. The possibility of increase in bit, however, in dollars and cents, will be higher than that on competitive cast.

**Adds Substantial Acre**

Bentonite development, however, has added a substantial acre in Wyoming's mineral program, and the future seems secure for the industrial industry as use of the product is widespread. Bentonite consists of a clay derived from volcanic ash and deposits found in northeastern Wyoming are of high quality. The American Colloid company, which has long been known under the name of "Volcanic Bentonite" has the largest reserves in the world but places main emphasis on their steady sources of supply. The company operates at Upton, Wyo., and another at Brule, S. D.

**● Largest stockpile of bentonite in the world is this huge supply ready for processing at the plant of the American Colloid company at Upton, Wyo.**



U. S. Navy firing a searchlight—Photo courtesy of U. S. Navy.

**W**YOMING led the nation last year in the production of bentonite—material of a thousand uses—and state plants are prepared to supply their quota of supplies for both war industry and domestic needs, a forecast that may prove accurate because of industrial transition now in progress.

Principal production comes from deposits and processing plants in Crook, Campbell and Weston counties of southeastern Wyoming, and the largest plant is at Upton. From state lands of that area a total of 12,818 tons of bentonite was mined and marketed last year, and an increase is anticipated for the coming year, according to J. B. Griffith, state land commissioner. The state derives a royalty for leases under operation.

Mining is done by steam shovels, which are also utilized for stripping operations, and the colloidal clay is transported in stock piles to await the drying and pulverizing process. The industry is important to that section of the state and represents a steady growth fostered in part by the incentive of producing companies in developing its resources.

**Wide Marketing Base**

Bentonite is used in family needs for household uses consisting of all kinds and is a boon for dynamite. It has active uses in the petroleum industry, in ceramics and in rubber and paper manufacture. As a binder for molting sands it provides for the casting of a smooth product instead of the former rough casting taken from the mold.

While new deposits have been discovered within the last year and leases have been in increased demand, there is no assurance that war industry in itself will increase greatly the consumption of the product due to the curtailment of its use in other industries being converted to war use. There was a substantial increase in that in business activities, and changes in these industries will be a factor in continued consumption.

The state which came from last

# Wyoming Leads Nation in Bentonite Production

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Wed, Apr 29, 2020