



James Harold Courtright (1908–1986)

2001 Inductee from Mining's Past

James Harold Courtright was born outside Yakima, Washington, in 1908. His introduction to mining came from working for his father as a mucker and miner in the Cascades. He studied at Sacramento Junior College and Mackay School of Mines, University of Nevada, though he never earned a degree due to financial restraints. In 1941, Courtright went to work at Consolidated Coppermines Corporation in Ely, Nevada, where he began his close association with Kenyon Richard, who was already an employee of that company.

Courtright joined ASARCO in 1945. While with ASARCO for the succeeding 34 years, Courtright contributed to the discovery, development, or enlargement of many copper porphyry orebodies. These include Silver Bell, Mission, San Xavier, Sacaton – Santa Cruz, and Florence (Poston Butte) in southwestern United States; East Jersey, Canada; Toquepala, Quellaveco, and Michiquillay, Peru; Santa Tomas, El Arco, and Concepcion del Oro in Mexico.

Courtright and Richard's refinement of leached capping interpretation and the use of the drill in primary exploration efforts were the main techniques that contributed to their exploration successes. Courtright's approach to exploration geology can best be summarized by quoting a remark he is said to have made to a prospective young geologist – "a geologist has just two tools, boot leather and a drill."

Courtright was appointed Chief Geologist for ASARCO in 1970. He retired in 1974. Harold Courtright was co-author of a number of geologic publications. He was a member of AIME, the Society of Economic Geologists, the Arizona Geological Society, and the Mining Club of the Southwest.