

REPORT ON GOLD PROSPECTS AT
HALLAM'S, PIPERS RIVER.

Introduction

Some weeks ago two large and many small nuggets of gold were found in gravels used in the repair of a section of the road fronting F. Hallam's property near Pipers River. These gravels were taken from a number of shallow pits on the property, but the particular pit from which the gold-bearing gravels were taken is not known. The discoveries were made by G. & R. Brumble, one of whom was engaged in the work of road repairing. Desiring advice on the nature of the formation, the writer was detailed to make an inspection.

Geologic Relations

The country hereabouts belongs to the gold-bearing Ordovician series of slates, sandstones, grits and conglomerates so well represented in the Lefroy, Mathinna and Lisle Fields. There the fundamental rocks are overlain by yellow clays and quartz rubble shed from numerous quartz veins that traverse them. Many of these veins are barren, others contain a little gold, some are accompanied by much pyrite as evinced by the presence of bodies of limonitic (hydrrous oxide of iron) material found cementing pieces of quartz.

The Nature and Source of the Gold

The nuggets exhibit many evidences of secondary deposition. First they show no sign of attrition, they are jagged in outline and are sharp-edged, again, they enclose pieces of ironstone and quartz similar to the materials found at surface. The gold then was deposited from solutions derived from quartz-pyrite bodies in the vicinity - possibly directly below the place whence the nuggets were taken. Seven large bulk samples of the quartz rubble from the several pits on analysis were found to contain only minute traces of gold. The inference from this is that the pyritic ore only contained gold in appreciable proportion. Evidence of the near presence of pyritic bodies is provided by the large bodies of limonite or gossan that are unearthed in two of the pits. As regards the actual source of the secondary nuggets it is impossible that the yellow iron-stained clays that underlie the gravels and rubble may prove to be the matrix from which they are shed.

General Remarks

The prospects of opening here a rich lead of alluvial gold are not bright. The jagged outlines of the nuggets clearly show that concentration by water action has not been pronounced. As regards the unveiling of the pyritic bodies from which they were shed this would prove a costly operation owing to their deep cover of clay and quartz detritus. It is doubtful whether the prospects are such as to warrant the necessary expenditure.

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