

REPORT ON THE ALLEGED DISCOVERY OF GOLD AT
LOIRA AND ROOKERY (WINKLEIGH)

Loira

Situation

Loira is a small settlement on the road to Beaconsfield, and about three miles south of that town. Brown's workings are situated in the flat country between the Post Office and Supply River, and a quarter of a mile from the main West Tamar Road.

Geologic Relations

The area is occupied wholly by rocks of the Permo-Carboniferous system, the sequence imdescending order being sandstone, pebbly mudstone, conglomerate.

The gold-bearing rocks of Beaconsfield and neighbourhood are Cambro-ordivician slates, sandstones, and limestones, and the gold-bearing quartz veins and lodes in them were derived from intrusive granitic rocks of Devonian Age. In Tasmania, with one exception, (at Cygnet) mineralisation took place during pre-Permo Carboniferous periods, therefore there is no possibility of the formation of gold deposits in rocks of later age. The Permo-Carboniferous are referred to as the coal measure series, although in places the coal seam is missing.

Exploration

Since his return to Tasmania Robert Brown has spent a considerable sum in sinking a shaft 70 feet in depth through sandstone and pebbly mudstone in search of alluvial deposits of gold. The idea in mind is that gold will be found below the mudstone.

A few feet only to the bed of sandstone remains. It consists of coarse quartz grains cemented with felspathic material. The presence of the sandstone cover is proof that the mudstone bed is intact. That being so the shaft will have to be sunk to a great depth through that and other members of the formation to reach the Cambro-ordivician strata below.

There is not the remotest possibility of finding alluvial deposits of commercial importance in the basal conglomerate member of the Permo-Carboniferous formation.

A quartz pebble found in the mudstone contained traces of gold and gave rise to the idea that richer material will be discovered at greater depth. Again, the presence of Marcasite and Pyrite in the joint planes of the mudstone is regarded as indicative of lode formations. Both ideas are without foundation on fact.

Rookery (Winkleigh).

The Rookery is part of a farm that once belonged to the Brown family. It is at a much higher elevation than Loira, but the rock formations are identical, the difference in elevation being due to

faulting. Mudstone again occupy the surface, and with other members of the Permo-Carboniferous formation overlie Cambro-Ordovician slates, sandstones and limestones. These latter outcrop in the lower country at Winkleigh and at Flowery Gully. There is no hope of success here.

Recommendations.

If it is desired by the investor to explore the district generally attention should be directed to the Cambro-ordivician rocks in the neighbourhood. Several gold-bearing reefs are known.

A. McIntosh Reid,
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