

REPORT ON OPERATIONS OF
MESSRS. BEST & TUSKIN,
BEACONSFIELD.

This party are working on the State Forest Reserve on Blue Tier, 2 miles south-east of Beaconsfield. The actual site of their operations is on the south-east side of Middle Arm Creek and the Flowery Gully Road where it enters the gorge along the creek.

Eaglehawk Gully has a general north-westerly direction and joins Middle Arm Creek. It is stated that gold was obtained from the detrital matter along this gully in the early days.

An adit is being driven in a general south westerly direction from a point on the west side of the gully. The object of the adit is to cut any source of the gold shed into Eaglehawk Gully and also obtained on the ridge under which the adit is being driven.

The workings on the ridge consist of numerous prospecting trenches, shallow shafts &c. It is stated that the material from the workings was taken to the creek and the gold content recovered. Further to the south-west there are more shafts one of which was sunk to 35 feet. It is said to have been sunk on a formation of quartz in soft sandstones. Pieces of conglomerate (cabbage tree) are found on the dump.

It is also stated that an adit was driven from Middle Arm Creek in a general south-easterly direction on a reef. On examining the road cutting in the gorge it would appear that the reef and adit were on the south-west side of one of the main beds of conglomerate. The 35 foot shaft referred to above was apparently on the east side of the conglomerate.

The workings of the party consist of the adit referred to above and driven in a general south-westerly direction. This direction is at right angles to the strike of the strata which consist of interbedded slates and quartzites dipping north west at 45 degrees. At the time of my visit the adit was approximately 275 feet in length and it is estimated that at least 400 feet would be necessary to cut any downward extension of the alleged reefs at the surface. Numerous narrow veins (up to 2 inches in width) were cut in the adit and were generally dipping to the south-west.

The adit is equipped with rails and also a pipe-line and furnace for ventilation. It was commenced in October last and has been driven by the party of two, who receive sustenance and explosives from a syndicate. Under these conditions it was stated that the work cost 15 shillings per foot. They informed me that they were applying for assistance to the extent of £2 per man per week for three months. The progress would average 5 feet per week and so the application would be for £52 to drive 65 feet.

The adit is purely a prospecting one, its only objective being to cut at a depth of over 100 feet any downward extension of gold-bearing reefs said to have been cut on the surface and to have shed a small quantity of gold. The small amount of work (shaft sinking) on the surface tends to prove either that they were of little or no value or else that they cut out in depth. The scheme of driving an adit over 400 feet

to cut at a depth of over 100 feet any downward extension of such reefs or veins is not one that could be recommended. A less ambitious scheme could have been planned to test them with less work and nearer the surface. Such work could have been attempted from the north or west and this would probably have avoided driving through the conglomerate beds. As it is now the adit will have to be driven through these hard beds to reach its objectives.

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