

REPORT

on

GOLD PROSPECTS AT LYMINGTON

In accordance with instructions received I visited Lymington in company with Mr. R.B. Reynolds.

The area of Crown land referred to by Mr. Reynolds was the flat at Lymington which occurs in the valley of Forster Rivulet upstream from the road bridge over the mouth of the above rivulet. The reservation along the northern bank was also included.

Mr. Reynolds had no mining tenement in connection with the land, nor had he performed any prospecting operations thereon. Mr. Coad, of Lymington, kindly conducted me over the district and showed me the old workings &c.

The Crown land forming the flat near the bridge is about 10 chains long and one to three chains wide and has an area of not more than 2½ acres. About half the length is covered by tidal waters, which have a rise and fall of approximately four feet. At low tide this portion is not covered, except for the channel of Forster Rivulet which ranged up to 12 feet in width and was stated to have a maximum depth of four feet. The remainder of the flat is grass-covered and only a few feet above creek level. The reservation on the north bank is occupied by steeply rising hillsides which would be most unlikely to contain gold and need not be further considered.

The bridge has earth and stone embankments on both sides with an opening some 12 to 15 feet wide to allow of the drainage of Forster Rivulet.

In the grassy flat, two old prospect holes are visible. Near, or on the private land at the head of the flat, one prospect hole has been sunk recently to a depth of 6½ feet and is stated to have yielded prospects of gold. Another prospect hole or small working was also visible nearby.

The prospect of this flat containing gold depends upon gold having been brought down by Forster Rivulet and deposited in the gravels &c. in the flat. It is stated that few, if any, workings occur in the valley of Forster Rivulet proper. I was, however, conducted over old workings in two small creeks which form a tributary of Forster Rivulet. This stream joins the main stream some 20 to 25 chains upstream from the head of the flat. As far as could be ascertained from Mr. Coad the mainstream has not been worked below the junction of the above tributary. The tributary has, however, been worked along a length of some 12 chains from the Rivulet, at which point two gullies unite to form the creek. These workings had a width ranging from 10 to 30 feet and it was stated that the depths ranged up to 14 feet. Of the tributary gullies, the southernmost was worked almost continuously for a length of 30 chains over narrow widths. The northernmost was worked for a slightly greater length, but towards the head, the workings were situated on a low ridge between the two gullies rather than in the head of the gully. This latter working was carried out by the Lymington Gold Mining Co. N.L., over a period of two years after 1894. The remainder of the workings in both gullies and the creek was performed by small parties. W.H. Twelvetrees in 1902 estimated that

some 3,000 ozs. of gold were obtained from the district and Mr. Coad informed me that the greater part of this was from the workings described above. The source of this gold does not enter into subject under review and will not be discussed here.

It is obvious from the above that gold has occurred in the two gullies and the tributary creek of Forster Rivulet. Some gold was probably carried into the latter stream and may occur even as far down as the alluvial flat near the bridge. The question as to whether such deposits would have a sufficient gold content to render them payable is quite another matter which cannot of course be accurately forecasted although the following general factors are applicable. It would appear that the alluvial deposits along Forster Rivulet below the junction of the tributary creek have not been worked, which rather tends to show that they were not payable. This could easily be the case because a much greater quantity of pebbles, sand &c. would be brought down Forster Rivulet compared with the tributary creek and this would tend to cause the deposits to have a lower gold content. Moreover, these deposits are further from the source of the gold and as is always the case would tend to be of lower grade and, therefore, less likely to be payable than those nearer the source.

As regards the lower portion of the flats near the bridge it is possible that portion of the deposits there may have been formed in the tidal waters of the small estuary in which case there would not be such an efficient concentration of gold as in the deposits formed by stream action further inland.

Thus on the whole the probabilities are that the deposits in the flat and lower portion of Forster Rivulet will not be so high in grade as those further inland in the tributary creek.

The only known tests of the ground are those reported by Twelvetees in his reports of 1902 and 1907 in which he stated that in 1884 or 1885, Mr. Lane sank in the bed of Forster's Rivulet above the bridge and obtained a result of half a grain to the dish. This would represent payable ground, but in view of the fact that it is not stated whether this referred to the bottom wash only or to the whole of the wash and drift, it would be misleading to make use of this figure.

In 1907, it was proposed to test the flat and bay with a view to dredging. It is not known if these tests were made, or what the results were, if made, but dredging was not started.

Another factor in connection with the flat is the area of it (a maximum of 2½ acres.) To work the ground it would be necessary to dam back the tidal waters at the bridge; divert Forster Rivulet by race or pipe-line and deliver the water on the Port Cygnet side of the bridge; to instal a small pumping plant to keep drainage water out of the workings in the flat; to construct an elevated tail race or else transport the wash &c. away from the flat to treat it; and possibly instal an hydraulic elevator (in which case the above pumping plant would not be necessary), and arrange for water supply for same. The ground would have to be of good grade to enable it to be profitably treated after providing for all the above constructional work &c.

The present position is that the deposits in the

flat probably contain gold, but that the exact content is not known. Little or no testing has been carried out to test the ground and none has been performed by Mr. Reynolds.

Sgd. P.B. Nye

GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST

Hobart,
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