

PBN/3

5th November, 1941

MEMORANDUM:

The information desired by Mr. McIver is very extensive and, as the Department has no publications dealing specifically with the matters, it would involve much research and time to answer them completely and accurately. I do not consider that the Department should devote much time to such enquiries and I propose, therefore, to deal with the matters only generally and briefly. I will use extracts from publications and also draw on the notes which I have made from time to time on the subject. I will also include references to our own publications so that Mr. McIver can, if he desires, purchase same from our Department.

1. First Discoverer of Gold in Tasmania:

The position regarding the first discovery in Tasmania is summarised in the following extract from the Tasmanian Official Record, 1890.

"In Tasmania, the first payable gold was found in 1852, about the Nook, near Fingal, and about the same time it was discovered in minute particles along the Tower Hill Creek and in the vicinity of Nine Mile Springs. The first quartz mine commenced operations at Fingal in the year 1859. In the same year gold was found in the River Forth by Mr. James Smith, and also good prospects at the Calder, a tributary of the Inglis, by Mr. Peter Lette. At Lefroy (Nine Mile Springs) reef gold was discovered by S. Richards in the year 1869. Traces of gold were also obtained in several places between Hadspen and the Town of Launceston. Gold was also discovered in the western and north-western portions of the island by Messrs. Gould, Jas. Smith, C.P. Sprent, Peter Lette, S.B. Emmett."

Further details of the first discovery and the name of the discoverer are given in Bulletin No. 1 (Mangana Goldfield), to which reference should be made.

Woods Almanac, 1857, states that gold was possibly first found at Fingal in 1851 by the "Old Major" who steadily worked at a gully for 2 to 3 years guarding his secret. In this connection, it should be stated that the discovery was probably at Mangana and that there is a gully there known as Major's Gully.

Discovery of other Goldfields:

2. While it is possible to give the approximate dates of discovery of other fields, it is not always possible to give the name of the discoverer. Available information for some of the fields is as follows:

- MATHINNA - (Black Boy or Reedy Creek) No particulars, but probably in fifties or sixties.
- LYNDHURST - 1869
- LEFROY - (Nine Mile Springs) S. Richards and party, 1869 (see Bulletin No. 42).
- BEACONSFIELD - (Brandy Creek) Earlier than 1872 Tasmania reef discovered in 1877 by Messrs. Dally.
- BROWNS PLAINS - Donelly, Long and Party, 1877 (John Brown in same year discovered payable gold).
- LISLE - Bessell Bros. End of 1878 (see Bulletin No. 4)
- LYNCHFORD - C. Lynch and Currie, 1881 or 1882
- MOUNT LYELL (Linda) McDonough Bros. and Karlson, 1883
- MOUNT VICTORIA - (or Alberton). Discoverer R.J. Wilson in late 1882 or early 1883.

In recent years, discoveries of small importance have been made at:

- Forestier 1921
- Lake River 1932
- Jane River 1935 (a re-discovery)

Gold was exported from Hobart and Launceston at least as early as 1859. The official recorded returns from the fields are, however, given as follows in the Official Record for 1890.

"The first recorded returns from the Mangana gold fields date from 1870; Waterhouse, 1871; Hellyer, Denison, and Brandy Creek, in 1872; Lisle, in 1878; Gladstone and Cam, in 1881; Minnow and River Forth, in 1882; Braxholm and Mount Victoria, in 1883; Mount Lyell, 1886.

3. Largest Nuggets

- (1) Nugget found at Long Plains by Bucker, May, 1882, Weight, 9 ozs.
- (2) Nugget found on the Rocky River by M'Guinty and party, March, 1883. Weight 243 ozs.
- (3) Nugget found on the Rocky River by Griffen and party, March 1883. Weight 143 ozs.

Models of these Tasmanian nuggets are exhibited in the Tasmanian Museum, Hobart.

- 4. It is unlikely that new fields will be discovered except possibly in the south central regions. It is much more likely that hitherto undiscovered reefs will be found in the old fields or between old fields.
- 5. As already stated, there are no publications dealing directly with the subject. To compile a complete and

accurate account Mr. McIver would have to investigate all current publications from 1850 onwards and particularly Journals of both Houses of Parliament.

As regards our departmental publications there are the Annual Reports of the Secretary (including Inspectors of Mines, &c.) and the geological reports. Of the latter the most important recent publications are Bulletins 1,4, 37, 42, and 43.

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