

No. 5877 PROSPECTING IN CANADA

Canada contains large areas favourable for the occurrence of mineral deposits, but there are many misconceptions regarding prospecting. Some persons think that little prospecting has been done, whereas there are actually few areas except in remote sections of the country that have not been prospected fairly thoroughly by ordinary methods. Others believe that prospecting requires little knowledge or experience, whereas it is mainly a skilled trade or profession, or an avocation for amateurs who have devoted considerable time to study and practice. Although the possibility of unqualified persons making important discoveries cannot be ruled out, authorities consider that the possibilities even for qualified prospectors are one in a thousand or less. Also, unimportant mineral occurrences are much more common than are those that warrant attention, and most of the latter have to be "opened up" in a preliminary way by the prospector himself. Therefore a prospector should not only know how to prospect but how to judge a discovery and to do preliminary work on it. Although many Canadian prospectors finance themselves, much of the work in recent years has been done either by highly qualified prospectors employed by companies or by organized teams of scientists and relatively unqualified men employed by companies.

Prospectors with non-immigrant status may take remunerative employment in Canada only with the prior approval of immigration authorities. The opportunities for newcomers to Canada for employment on prospecting programs are also limited because companies desire persons familiar with working under Canadian pioneer conditions.

Except in accessible areas where the possibilities for ordinary prospecting are less favourable, prospecting is a fairly costly undertaking. Special clothing, camp equipment, tools and instruments, as well as a canoe or other form of transportation, are commonly required. Because of the short season in the Canadian north prospectors often arrange to be flown to and from the area of operation. Such flights are usually at rates of \$50 to \$100 an hour.

Available Information

The Canadian Department of Mines and Technical Surveys provides several services that aid prospectors. Among the most important of these are the issuing of geological maps and reports, and special publications on prospecting. These and other publications cover the various aspects of the subject adequately and are revised periodically; therefore those seeking information are urged to order publications instead of asking for replies to questions by letter. Officials of the Department do not select areas for prospectors, advise by mail on the merits of discoveries, nor examine discoveries except when these are included in a research project being undertaken for the purposes of the Department.

It is recommended that those seriously interested in prospecting in Canada should first obtain "Prospecting in Canada" (price \$2.00); Map 900A, showing principal mining areas and producing mines (price 25¢); and perhaps also Map 1045A, a general geological map of Canada (price 25¢). These may be ordered from the Director, Geological Survey of Canada, Ottawa, Canada.