

THE BRIDGE RIVER DISTRICT.

The Bend Or group of claims, recently acquired by Messrs. McKinnon, Robertson and Noel, from the locators, two young half-breeds, named Burns and Cargill, consists of two claims known as the Little Joe and White Crow. This group is situated about 66 miles from Lillooet, lying in a south westerly direction on Cadwallader Creek, which is a tributary of Bridge River. Leaving Lillooet for the claims the traveller must follow the wagon road for two miles to Seaton Lake and thence cross the lake by canoe to Mission Landing, or if he prefers it, travel around the lake by trail. The water route is twelve miles distance and the trail route fourteen miles. Leaving the lake one must continue in a westerly direction, pass over the summit of Mission mountain, a distance of five miles, descending to Jack's Landing, Bridge River, then follow Bridge River for a distance of 3½ miles in a south-westerly direction, next up the south fork of Bridge River, a distance of about seven miles to Cadwallader Creek. The Provincial Government has built a trail to the camp and it is stated that a wagon road will be completed early next spring from Seaton Lake to Cadwallader Creek. It takes three days to travel this route on horseback from Lillooet.

Evidence of the importance of these discoveries can be noted by the fact that three different locations are now recorded for townsites, two on the south fork of Bridge River and one below the Bend Or group on Cadwallader Creek.

The claims of known value are the Bend Or group of claims, the Ida May, a group of two claims, owned by the Alpha Bell Co., and one fractional claim, between the Bend Or and Ida May. As to the district in general, Mr. F. Soues, Gold Commissioner, writes as follows in his annual report: "Bridge River—Referring to the very imperfect Provincial map, a line drawn from the junction of Big River with Fraser River, to the head waters of Jervis Inlet, would form the centre of the locality to which my remarks will refer. From a personal residence of 34 years in the district of Pemberton, Lillooet and Clinton and during the whole of that time with exceptional opportunities to learn the amount of gold obtained and the localities, I may be supposed qualified to deal with the matter intelligently and correctly. In the decade ending 1869 official public reports with regard to mines and mining in this district are conspicuous only by their absence. The early miners into this Province, 1859-60, worked their way up the Fraser River, testing all the tributaries for gold. Bridge River in those years was located and worked and from that time on to the present by white, Indian and Chinese miners, year by year, with varying success. The richest finds and richest nuggets were obtained in the decade referred to. For the decade ending 1879 we have official mining statistics commencing in 1874, in some of which annual reports, place has been found for Lillooet district and the estimated returns. In others the district has been entirely ignored.

From 1860 to the discovery of Cayoosh Creek, Bridge River has been the principal source of the gold obtained. In the old mercantile books of Mr. Smith, Mr. Foster and the other traders doing business in Lillooet in the sixties and the records of the now almost forgotten Diets and Nelson ex-

press line for carrying express and treasure between Victoria and Lillooet, could be examined, the result would be a very striking array of figures of the amount of gold obtained from Bridge River and the Fraser benches and bars in the immediate neighborhood of Lillooet. In the early sixties the principal workings were from the mouth to the head of Deep Canyon, from which point the river flows through a long marshy section some fifty miles. The river bed here is a smooth, sandy, with fine gravel, in which only fine colors have been found. Above this stretch Tyaughton Creek has produced considerable coarse gold. Young Creek so far has produced only fine gold in a limited quantity. Coarse gold is here found on Cadwallader Creek and the South Fork. Mr. A. W. Smith showed me samples of 6 oz. of very coarse gold, which he bought from an Indian last week, whose claim is located at a point above Gun Creek. The valley of the Bridge River for a considerable distance is paralleled by the valley in which are situated Seaton Lake and Anderson Lake and at one point on Seaton Lake the distance to Bridge River at Jack's Landing is only about 6 miles. The division between these two valleys is a high and much broken up ridge of mountains with numerous streams (not shown on the Provincial map) falling into the above named lakes.

"It will be noted from the foregoing brief and imperfect remarks that Bridge River and its tributaries have been in places highly auriferous with a possible barren zone above the deep canyon and further that it has a wide spread surrounding or mineralised rocks. The gold found in the river is unmistakeably different to that found on the Fraser River bars and benches and in form and size of the pieces bears a strong resemblance to the gold found in the placer workings in Bendigo, Victoria, in the early fifties, with this difference that Bridge River gold shows much more recent release from its rocky matrix, in fact at least one-third of the pieces still hold imbedded pieces of quartz.

In other lands placer mining has with few exceptions, whether in wide areas of alluvial deposits, in ancient or modern river beds, led up to the discovery of the rocky matrix from which the alluvial gold was obtained. Placer deposits in a few years led to the discovery of the famous Comstock lode. Placer deposits located the Treadwell mine on Douglas Island. The fabulously rich placer mines of Ballarat and Bendigo, discovered in 1851, in two years located the reefs, some of which Bendigo have "lived down" over 5,000 feet and have continued working for over forty years. The experience on Cayoosh Creek shows that in little more than one year the matrix of at least a portion of the gold found in the creek will be located.

In the above report Mr. Soues has given a sketch of properties on Bridge River, which have added to the golden wealth of the district and province for parently the past 36 years and now the recent discoveries of the Bend Or and Ida May groups of claims have apparently demonstrated whence much of the supply comes. It is a moreover noted fact that for every dollar obtained from the bed of Cayoosh Creek twenty dollars have been taken from Bridge River and the rich quartz ledges recently discovered have undoubtedly furnished the supply that has been gathered from its earliest history.

THE ATHABASCA.

The following is a summary of the report, recently issued, of the Athabasca (Gold Mining Co.):

Nelson, B. C., Oct. 25, 1897.

The Athabasca Gold Mining Company, New Westminster, B. C.

Gentlemen:—There are at present 276 feet of tunnels, 110 feet of shafts, and about 800 feet of stripping (290 feet of which has been upon ledges the balance being in the nature of prospecting), besides which there is an open cut 30 feet long by 12 feet high, and various upraises, slopes, etc.

The work has disclosed several bodies of ore of excellent grade, although considerable work will be required to develop these bodies sufficiently to pay dividends.

Upon the main ledge is a tunnel 275 feet and a winze 68 feet, at the foot of which is a drift 16 feet, this winze and drift being in ore 1 to 18 inches wide, assays of which, at a depth of 68 feet, gave \$101.60 per ton in gold. Operations on the drift have been suspended, owing to bad air and seepage of water, and before re-opening, arrangements will have to be made for hoisting, either by steam or horse power. There are also two upraises from the tunnel to the surface and considerable stoping has been done and ore mined from this ledge. South of this 150 feet, a great deal of work has been done, consisting of 146 feet of tunnels, 3½ feet of drifts, etc. Very rich ore has been found here, several shipments having averaged \$100 per ton. Seventy-five feet east of the main ledge, another ledge has been stripped about 150 feet, showing six to 12 inches of quartz. One hundred feet west of the main ledge, a stripping of about 50 feet has been made on about 10 inches of quartz. About 300 feet west of the main ledge, a discovery has been made this month of a very fine looking ledge, about 16 inches wide where opened, which is now being stripped. We intend to do some work upon this showing at once, as it is very promising, and may, with a little work, develop into as valuable a producer as the ledges now worked.

All the above work has been done upon the Athabasca claim.

Upon the Algoma claim there has been about 70 feet of stripping on the ledge, which runs in size from 6 to 30 inches, but as this ore (as also that on the Athabasca ledges stripped as above) is of a milling character, more extended work has been deferred until milling facilities are provided.

No work has been done on either the Alberta or Manitoba claims, but there are on these claims, and on the Athabasca and the Algoma, several additional exposures of quartz that have not yet been investigated. All the exposures mentioned carry free gold, more or less.

The preliminary work of building cabins, trail, etc., was mentioned in my report in July last. Since then the survey of the property has been completed, and a Crown grant is now being advertised for. The number of men employed has ranged from 16 to 27.

Our shipments to the Hall Mines smelter have given returns (gross) as follows: 16 1-2 tons, \$76.20 per ton; 17 tons, \$75.56 per ton; 18 tons, \$26.56 per ton; 18 3-4 tons, \$26.45 per ton; 21 tons, \$74.36 per ton; 19 tons, \$41.81 per