

There's Gold in Them Thar Hills

Echoes From the Past – Essay #10



Ever hear of the Hammonds Plains Gold Mines? Betting the answer is no. Surprisingly enough, they did exist. Here is the story behind the attempt to strike it rich in Hammonds Plains.

Parts of the Hammonds Plains area are actually located on part of a quartz rock formation that has gold in it. This formation generally stretches from the Pockwock Lake area through the northern parts of Upper Hammonds Plains, although there are out crops that exist in a few other areas.

Starting in 1861, a gold rush began in Nova Scotia with gold hysteria attracting thousands to try their hand in gold mining. An area where rock samples indicated gold existed just south of Pockwock Lake. So, in 1863 the area was surveyed and enough evidence of gold was found to dig three shafts, the largest being 37 metres long. Gold was mined there for several years but not enough was found to make it a viable long term operation so the project was abandoned in 1868. The mines were dug just west of the walking trail that now leads from the Pockwock Road down the hill to Pockwock Falls. The remains of the old mines can be still found today.

Several small open pit mining operations were attempted in other areas of Hammonds Plains over the years. One area that had such operations was on the Lucasville Road, near the Hammonds Plains end.

A portion of the 1864 map of Hammonds Plains shown below clearly shows the Hammonds Plains Gold Mines marked. This is lasting proof that gold was once considered to be a potential route to economic prosperity in the community. In the end, the dream of gold was replaced by timber as the saw mill would become the economic lifeline of Hammonds Plains soon after the 1860's.

Could gold fever hit Hammonds Plains again? Probably not. But our past tells us that there is indeed gold in them thar hills of Hammonds Plains.

