A REPORT ON THE MINERALOGY OF THE HARRISON GROUP,

LINDQUIST LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

by

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ABSTRACT

A previous study of specimens from the Harrison Group of **mineral claims had disclosed the occurrence of the tellurld ^e minerals hesslte and tetradymite, associated with cosalite, galena, sphalerite, chalcopyrite, arsenopyrite, pyrite and native** gold.¹ As the amount of native gold in evidence did not ap**proximate that indicated by assays, the collection of some relativel y massive and unweathered specimens by Dr.** H. v. **Warren** and Dr. R. M. Thompson in the summer of 1949 led to a further study of the mineralogy being made. As a result of this later **work, the additional occurrence of the tellurld e minerals tel** lurbismuth and altaite was determined and many new relationships were observed. The presence of each of these telluride minerals and that of cosalite was confirmed by X-Kay powder **pattern photographs.**

I Young, J. W., "A study of the Mineralogy of the Harrison Group, Whitesail Lake.11 Unpublished Report, University of Britis h Columbia, Department of Geology. 1946

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This mineralographic study was carried out in the Department of Geology at the University of British Columbia, under **the supervision of Dr. H. V. Warren and Dr. R. M. Thompson, professors of Mineralogy. The unfailing attitude of cooperation shown by these members of the instructional staff was greatly** appreciated, as their advice and suggestions proved to be in**valuable aids throughout this work.**

The writer is also indepted to Mr. J. A. Donnan, technician **ⁱ n the Geology Department, for his excellent instructions i n the techniques of preparing bakelite mounts and their subsequ**ent polishing by both the Graton-Vanderwilt process and indi**vidual hand methods. Confirmatory identificatio n of several of the minerals was performed by Dr. R.M. Thompson with X-Ray powder pattern photographs. The cooperation of several of the fourth year geology students in the taking of microphotographs** was also appreciated.

The previous report on the mineralogy of the Harrison Group was of great assistance in the present work.² Specimens **dealt with previously were reviewed to make comparisons and to propose several new paragenetlc relationships for the mineralization.**

2 loc. cit .

INTRODUCTION

The Harrison Group of Mineral Claims was discovered and staked during 1943* by the Harrison brothers of Wistaria, B.C. The presence of megascopic tetradymite and associated high assays for gold and silver were sufficient to attract many mining companies to this property in subsequent years. A program of diamond drilling and surface exploration was undertaken **by Bloneer uold Mines Limited during 1945 and 1946. In al l** some 3700 feet of diamond drilling was carried out by this **company.3**

The claims covering the surface showings are located some 1300 feet above and some 5 miles by trai l from the west end of Whltesall Lake, Omlneca Mining Division. At an average elevation of 4000 feet, the area between Lindquist Lake and the west end of Whitesail Lake is very mountainous, being only a few miles **east of the summit of the main Coast Range. Numerous glaciers occur above the 5000 foot level and snow often lingers until** July even along the lower river valleys.

3 Annual Report of the Minister of Mines, British Columbia, **1946, p. A71.**

GENERAL GEOLOGY

The Harrison Group of claims are located astride the eastern contact of the Coast Range Batholith, which trends almost due west in this locality. A buff coloured, silicified contact zone up to fifty feet in width exists between the gneissic **quartz-diorite of the batholith and the Hazelton Group, which** here consists of black slate, tuffaceous argillite, thin bedded **tuffs and some coarse volcanic breccia. The East-West trending contact dips steeply (60°) to the south-west. The Hazel**ton Group strata strike almost parallel to the contact zone, **but dip steeply (70°) to the North.4**

Along the intrusive contact a zone of quartz stringers occurs over a width of some one hundred feet. The more important veins are in the quartz-diorite and approximately **parallel the contact.** The drilling has shown that there is **probably only one main East-West vein with several branching northerly and northwesterly trending veins on both sides of the contact. The main vein averages five feet in width wherever intersected by drill-holes , but since i t dips flatl y to the North (45°), the main mineralization may have been local** ized in the main vein and its branches within and adjacent to **the altered contact zone.5**

4 loc. cit .

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5 Personal conjecture.

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MINERALOGY

A Macroscopic

Approximately *3%* **of the vein matter i s sulphides. Those present and i n order of abundance are pyrite, sphalerite, chalcopyrite, arsenopyrite, galena and cosalite. The cosalite** is found only in a few isolated parts of the veins, and in **minor amounts. It rarely can be determined i n hand specimens,** probably because it occurs closely associated with galena.

The silver telluride hessite and a bismuth telluride can **be detected i n hand specimens. They occur as fine, lead-gray** to black streaks along small fractures in quartz or as coat**ings 1 mm. or so thick along fracture surfaces throughout the massive sulphide. Some museum type specimens of tetradymite were collected by Young, these being foliated masses showing the micaceous cleavage and splendent metallic lustre.**

The mineralization i s almost wholly along fractures In the quartz veins. There seems to be no general pattern to the fracturing and there is a great variation in the size of the **openings. Some of the coated surfaces of mixed tellurldes seem to be slickensided, indicating some movement after the main mineralization.**

Some carbonate material can be noted around the borders of the various minerals and filling small fractures in the **quartz. The bismuth and silve r tellurides tarnish black while**

a bright blue-green tarnish is prevalent on areas of tellur**bismuth containing intergrowths of altaite .**

Numerous beads of silver and an occasional one of gold **can be "sweated*1 from hand specimens of vein material placed i n a hot stove for several hours. No native gold has been observed macroscopically, nor has any ever been panned from the mineralized quartz.**

B Microscopic

1 Sulphides

Pyrite occurs in large subhedral grains throughout the **mineralized quartz, in some parts*of the vein apparently con**stituting the main sulphide. It is much fractured, with fill**ings of galena, sphalerite, chalcopyrite, and occasionally tetradymite, along these fractures.**

Arsenopyrlte i s more abundant i n sections than would be suspected from the hand specimens. It takes a better polish than pyrite and yet stands in relief above the base metal sulphides. The characteristic brown and violet polarization **colours can readily be noted. Pew euhedral grains are present.** Arsenopyrite is associated with almost all of the other sul**phides and tellurides , as i t occurs fillin g fractures i n quartz** which were later re-opened with deposition of the sulphides **and tellurides . It i s not fractured to the same degree as pyrite.**

Chalcopyrite i s usually associated with sphalerite, either as contiguous masses or as microscopic blebs following the cleavage traces of the sphalerite. Thin veinlets of chalcopyrite alone are noted filling fractures in the quartz and pyrita

Sphalerite occurs as massive areas occuping relatively large spaces in the quartz. It can be recognized by its iso**tropic character under polarized light , mouse grey colour and yellow-brown internal reflection. Both oriented and irregularl y distributed inclusions of chalcopyrite are always present** in the sphalerite. That some of these chalcopyrite blebs are **the result of ex-solution along the crystallographic planes** of sphalerite is entirely possible. The irregularly distri**buted masses of chalcopyrite may be remnants, sis where adjacent masses of these two sulphides are noted, the sphalerite exhibit s contacts that are concave towards the chalcopyrite. This may be taken as evidence of replacement, but i s alone inconclusive. Sphalerite ranges from minute areas 100-200 microns ⁱ n size up to large masses several centimetres across.**

Galena i s noted as occurring only In limited amounts by Itself . Its presence has been regarded as being indicative of higher assays.^ Tongues and Irregular masses of galena can be noted around the border of tetradymite (Plate Y-l) . These can be considered as residual areas of galena, but other

6 Young, op. cit. , p. 6

relationships indicate that in part the galena is later than **tetradymite (Plate 10)• Where veinlets of tetradymite do** transect galena, these end abruptly in sphalerite, only a few microns past a galena-sphalerite contact. Galena is intimately associated in time and occurrence with tetradymite and cosalite. The relationships between these three minerals will be discussed under cosalite.

The etch reactions of galena agree with those listed by Short.⁷ The presence of triangular pits and isotropic character under polarized light are usually sufficient to identify any large grains of galena. Against large masses of tetrady**mite, galena has a bluish grey tinge, while hessite exhibits** a rougher surface and duller grey colour. Small areas of tet**radymite i n galena look creamy yellow, whereas altait e appears white in the same surroundings.**

Cosalite (2PbS.Bi₂S₃) was discovered by Young in only one **isolated part of the main vein and in minor amounts.** 8 **It was** not noted in the more massively mineralized sections. In re**viewing Young's section (Whltesail No. 17) containing the** cosalite, a faint intergrowth texture was noted with one nicol inserted in the microscope. Fairly strong pleochroism of at

7 Short, M. N., "Microscopic Determination of the Ore Minerals1 1 , U.S.G. S. Bull . 914, *p.itS.*

8 Young, op. cit. , p. *7.*

least one of the minerals was noted under high magnification. Under crossed nicols both appeared anisotropic. However, it **was realized that a strongly anisotropic mineral such as cos**alite would impart a false anistropism to an intimately associated isotropic mineral. Cosalitewas assumed to be the main groundmass, since it had been identified by Young as entirely composing this particular section.⁹

Etch Reactions were as follows:

For the Intergrowth

A series of minerals were indicated by these etch reactions, depending upon whether the mineral intergrown with cosalite was anisotropic or isotropic. An X-Ray powder pattern **photograph of the intimate intergrowth showed the presence of** cosalite and galena, with the lines for the latter mineral being predominant. The previous etch reaction, if applied to the table of isotropic minerals, would fit galena perfectly.

9 Young, p. 41.

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For Cosalite

On preparation of another section of cosalite and thorough examination under X-nicols, i t was noted that i n some areas the galena was in excess of the cosalite (Plate 11), whereas **in other areas interlocking cosalite crystals formed areas 1 mm. or so across, with only a few small areas being apparently galena (Plate 12). It should be stated that in no area could these two minerals be distinguished except by etching with 1:1 solution of HCL. A series of etch tests were performed on mounted specimens of cosalite and galena from the** Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine. Dr. Warren lists cosalite as being **negative to HCL¹ ⁰ and this was confirmed by the standardi**zation tests. Galena is very positive to HCL.

Miperous laths of tetradymite transect cosalite and galena alike. These vary from thin intersecting lamellae to tabular laths 200-300 microns long (Plate Y-2). Tetradymite exhibits a creamy yellow colour adjacent to cosalite or galena* These tetradymite laths do not show any enlargement where they intersect. However, there is a noticeably feathery edge to many of **the laths, showing a progressive replacement from the main tabular body outwards into the cosalite-galena intergrowth.** The laths definitely follow some predetermined structural lines **in the original host.**

10 Warren: H.V. "An Occurrence of Cosalite in British **Columbia" University of Toronto Studies, Geol. Ser. #42,1939.**

Argentlte (AggS) was noted In only one section, where two irregular areas of less than one hundred microns were present i n tetradymite. Those areas appeared dark gray against the tetradymite and isotropic under polarized light . They were at first assumed to be slightly oxidized galena, which in adjacent areas can be noted in tetradymite. The keen eye of Dr. Warren detected a lack of the slightly bluish gray tinge **shown by galena against tetradymite.**

Etch Reactions for ArgentIte were as follows

As a result of these etch reactions, either argentite or hessite was indicated. The mineral was removed for X-Ray purposes by Dr. Thompson. Since a mixture of tetradymite and the unknown was removed, the resulting powder pattern photograph d id not clearly indicate whether the unknown was hessite or argentite. As the mineral was very sectile and showed none of the prominent polarization colours so common in hessite of **this suite, the identificatio n as argentite i s proposed. The black tarnish firs t noted on this mineral also tends to confirm**

this identification. No areas of this mineral were noted in **any of the other sections.**

2 Tellurides and Native Gold

Tetradymite (BigTeSj) occurs sparingly in.the sections prepared by this writer. In several of Young's sections the main constituent i s tetradymite, evidently prepared from selected specimens. In polished sections this bismuth tellu**rlde appears bright white, with a creamy yellow tinge against bluish gray galena. Wavy cleavage traces are often prominent.** Under polarized light the polarization colours vary from light **gray to yellowish gray. Tetradymite may be present as massive plates of interlocking grains, as revealed under crossed nicols or as intersecting laths throughout the cosalite-galena intergrowth.**

> **Etch Reactions for essentially pure tetradymite of** this suite agree with those listed by $R.M.$ Thompson¹¹

11 Thompson, R. M. "The Tellurlde Minerals and their Occurrence in Canada," American Mineralogist, Vol. 34, 1949, **P. 370**

As mentioned previously, galena, hessite and argentite are impurities within tetradymite. Galena and argentite are located near the edge of the telluride grains, while hessite **ⁱ s not thus restricted. Where grayish black alteration i s present on tetradymite, small areas of native gold are common (Plate Y-2).**

Tellurbismuth (Bi₂T₃) is the most abundant telluride in the unweathered specimens collected during 1949. Tellurbis**muth appears pinkish white i n polished sections and more distinctl y so against the bluish white of altait e or creamy** white of tetradymite. No traces of cleavage were noticed in the numerous sections containing tellurbismuth, although it **possesses the same foliated habit as tetradymite.**

In polarized light this mineral appears more strongly **anisotropic than tetradymite (dark to yellowish gray). Minute** blebs and vermicular masses of altaite are usually present throughout (Plates 5,6,7,8). Against hessite there is often a selvage of tellurbismuth free from altaite intergrowths **(Plate 2), while there i s a marked variation i n the texture of the intergrowth elsewhere.**

Etch Reactions for Tellurblsmuth are as follows

These are identical with those for tetradymite. Dr. Thompson reports the etch reactions for tellurblsmuth as being vari able. !2 Where the pinkish tinge i s not noticeable, these two bismuth tellurides are indistinguishable in polished sections. The identification in this work was confirmed by X-Ray photo**graph.**

Altaite (PbTe) is noted as graphic intergrowths in tellurbismuth or as minute areas in galena. Only one large mass of altaite was located, this presenting smooth contacts with hessite (Plate 2). It is lighter in colour than galena and **faintl y bluish white against pinkish tellurblsmuth.**

Etch Reactions for Altaite are as follows

ance. In polished sections it is light gray, darker than **galena, and with distinctive anisotropism. A mosaic pattern** of alternating orange and blue areas is present under crossed nicols (Plate 2). In reflected light the surface is often pitted and fractured. Hessite is closely associated with the **other tellurides , as isolated remnants in tellurblsmuth (Plate** *3),***or i n tetradymite.**

Etch Reactions for Hessite are as follows

(cannot be removed by buffing) Native gold occurs i n very fine equidmensional grains within tetradymite and galena, also as narrow zig-zag veinlets in hessite. The veinlets within the silver telluride appear very much paler in colour than the rounded blebs within tet**radymite. This may be a matter of colour background or may be an indication that the native metal within hessite i s more** nearly electrum. Much of the gold in tetradymite is apparently related to areas of alteration, as is also that gold **occuring adjacent to the various tellurides in quartz. It is**

probable that loci of gold deposition, at the end of the **mineral sequence, would also consititue localitie s vulnerable to hydrothermal and meteoric solutions. The close association of native gold to the tellurides tetradymite and hessite suggest that these two mineral may be auriferous. No native gold was noticed within sphalerite, pyrite, chalcopyrite, arsenopyrlte or tellurblsmuth.**

Some carbonate material fill s the interstices between various minerals and also fractures in all the sulphides and **tellurides . This may be assumed to have accompanied the gold deposition. The particular carbonate was not identified. It 16 widespread i n occurrence but only i n minute amounts.**

PARAGENESIS

Quartz is the earliest mineral formed, as the main sulphides fill fractures in it. Some quartz penetrates fractures **i n pyrite.**

Pyrite is the earliest sulphide deposited, as the irregular fractures in pyrite are occupied by all of the other **sulphides except arsenopyrlte.**

Arsenopyrlte was probably contemporaneous with pyrite. It has proved to be less susceptible to fracturing. The later **sulphide mineralization has probably occurred along reopened fractures in the quartz, where pyrite and arsenopyrlte had been deposited previously.**

Sphalerite and Chalcopyrite are considered to overlap genetically, as their contacts are not conclusive of any replacement nor of any succession.

Galena is later than sphalerite and chalcopyrite in the **sequence, for embayments of galena into sphalerite were noted. Galena also penetrates along sphalerite-chalcopyrite grain boundaries. Most of the galena i s earlie r than tetradymite (Plate Y-l) , but some galena can be noted following the wavy cleavage of the tellurlde (Plate 10). Thus chronologically, galena i s here considered to cover a considerable range.**

Cosalite and galena exhibit a "psaudo-eutetic texture" over large areas. Both of these minerals are present in excess of the actual intergrowth. Galena alone is typically massive, although very finely crystalline. Cosalite commonly **consists of a mass of interlocking, plumose grains, showing the typical fibrous habit (Plate 12). Some of the noticeably** fibrous grains (under crossed nicols) are indicated by a light **HCL etch to be galena rather than cosalite. The writer concludes from this that galena i s pseudomorphous after cosalite and thus replacing it . This i s substantiated by the actual form of the intergrowth as exhibited in Plate 11. Indeed, the texture here only resembles an Intergrowth because of the replacement of the distintl y fibrous cosalite by galena.**

The laths of tetradymite have a definite relationship to this replacement. Where large single laths of tetradymite are present, even slight etching with HCL fumes and examination under crossed nicols reveals that the replacement by galena is restricted to an area on one side of the tetradymite lath. The other side is found to be massive cosalite. Where intersecting laths of tetradymite are present as in Plate 13, the maximum replacement by galena is adjacent to these. Thus re**placement of cosalite by galena can be concluded to have been** faciliated in those areas made more accessible by transecting laths of tetradymite. The localization of the replacement to **one side of a large tetradymite lath indicates that the tet**radymite was present in the cosalite prior to the partial replacement of the latter mineral by galena.

Hessite was not noted replacing or filling fractures in **any of the sulphides. However i t does occur as apparently** residual grains in tetradymite and tellurbismuth (Plates 3,7). It is thus considered the first telluride mineral deposited.

Argentite is placed in the same time category as hessite **on a purely logical basis. It may be much earlier and may have suffered replacement by the other sulphides. However, as i t occurs as two rounded residual areas in tetradymite,it** is genetically placed with the silver telluride.

Tetradymite contains remnant grains of galena and hessite. **The laths of tetradymite in cosalite are shown previously to be earlie r than galena. Galena also follows the wavy cleavage traces of tetradymite in some cases (Plate 10). The thin intersecting tetradymite laths are related to the larger tabular bodies and masses of this same mineral. In one area of section (Whitesail No. 17) the fine lattice-work of tetra**dymite is joined to a single large transecting lath, in cosalite partially replaced by galena along this lattice-work. Any need for proposing ex-solution of tetradymite in cosalite to form the lattice texture can be disregarded in favour of replacement. Several of the large tabular masses show irregular **fingers of tetradymite extending into the cosalite.**

The directional control exercised, evidently by the ori ginal cosalite, on the replacing tetradymite is remarkable and **yet confusing.** One large lath was noted as being parallel to **and yet some 50 microns from the generally straight boundary between two massive cosalite grains. The intersecting laths** strike at various angles, yet have a fairly regular general **pattern wherever present. They cannot be related to the cleavage of cosalite but may be following two other prominent elements of the atomic arrangement. The intersecting planes thus followed may be at angles of 90° i n an ideal section.**

Tellurblsmuth i s rarely in contact with tetradymite, yet where such is the case, the relationship seems to be one of replacements by the sulphur free variety. This is in accord**ance with the general sequence shown, this being towards a decreasing sulphur content. In the area shown by Plate Y-3** laths of the pink tellurbismuth, not visible in the photograph, **occur in the white tetradymite. In one Instance, a lath of** tetradymite transects both tellurbismuth and alaite (Plate8,9).

Tellurblsmuth almost invariably contains blebs and rods of altaite in various shpes and sizes, the whole constituting a graphic intergrowth. Such intergrowths of these two tellurides have been reported by various workers.¹³ In this suite both minerals are present in excess of the intergrowth, yet **with only tellurblsmuth in excess immediately adjacent (Plates 2, 8). There i s a complete lack of recognizable replacement features between these two minerals. They necessarily are grouped as having been deposited simultaneously. Both are sulphur free tellurides, so that they are probably closely related in time of deposition, although no true eutetic i s proposed.**

Native gold i s probably the las t mineral formed, as i t veins hessite and occurs in equidimensional grains in the **other tellurides and galena. Only one grain of gold was**

13 Thompson, p. 362.

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noticed in tellurbismuth, which is less altered than tetrady**mite. The loc i of gold deposition are areas susceptible to later altering solutions, being definitely related to residuals of galena or hessite in tetradymite, or to replacement laths of tetradymite in cosalite.**

CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions with respect to the sequence of mineralization have been stated previously in this report. **As a result of a study of Young's size and mineralogical distribution tables,¹ ^ and certain observations made throughout this present work, certain other conclusions can be formed. 1 Native gold occurs i n hessite, tetradymite, cosalite and galena. This gold i s considered to account for the low Ag:Au ratio shown for tota l distribution i n products of** between 70 and 100 mesh size. The ratio reaches a high in the 100 mesh product and then is constant for 150,200 and *m* -200 mesh products. The highest silver and gold assays are obtained in the -200 mesh product. This indicates that **much of the gold values either come from the same mineral as the silver , or from a mineral that responds to crushing** in almost the identical manner as the silver bearing mineral. The obvious conclusion is that the silver telluride contains **gold i n it s chemical composition, thus contributing almost** all of the silver values and a major portion of the gold as **well. The majority of hessite grains examined did not contain any native gold.**

2 Several pertinent factors concerning the possible treatment of the complex 'ore1 should be considered. The firs t of 14 Young, pp. 17-29.

these concerns the preceeding conclusion, that hessite contins gold in its chemical composition. Whether this gold **ⁱ s recoverable has not been indicated by any work completed** to date. Another factor is that although fine grinding seems to yield the best assay results, it may not be economically **conducted as a milling process. The presence of arsenopyrlte may constitute an injurious effect to cyanldation processes. The possible recovery of Pb and Zn should also be investigated.**

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Plate 1. X168

Smooth contacts of altaite, hessite and tellurblsmuth.

As = Arsenopyrite

Plate 2. X168

Approximately the same area, under X-nicols. Altaite tellurbismuth intergrowth at lower left.

Plate 3. X168

Isolated remnants of hessite in tellurbismuth.

He-= Hessite Te = Tellurbismuth

Tellurbismuth veinlet cutting hessite and apparently replacing same.

 $27_•$

Plate 5. X168 One nicol.

Filling of tellurblsmuth (Tel) in quartz. Alteration (Alt.) of the tellurides. Intergrowth of altaite barely visible.

Plate 6. X168

Same general area, under X-nicols. Intergrowth of altaite (light rods) in same orientation over large area. Larger light areas are anisotropic tellurbismuth grains.

Plate 8. X168. X-nicols

Graphic intergrowth of altaite (Al) and tellurbismuth (Tel). Note selvage of pure tellurbismuth. Dark lath of tetradymite (Td) transects the intergrowth.

Plate 9. X168. X-nicols

Same general area, rotated ca 90° on stage. Tetradymite lath (Td) clearly visible.

Plate Y-1. X270 Residual areas of galena (Ga) in tetradymite (Td)

Galena (Ga) following wavy and crenulated cleavage traces of Tetradymite (Td.)

Plate 11. X168 X-nicols

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Intergrowth of cosalite (Cs) and galena (Ga). All white areas are positive to HCL, thus are galena. All grey and dark areas negative to HCL, thus cosalite. Td = tetradymite lath.

Large areas of anisotropic cosalite (Cs) with minor areas of galena (Ga). Straight laths of tetradymite (Td) appear to transect both sulphides. Galena is replacing cosalite along tetradymite laths.

Plate 12. X168 X-nlcol s

Laths of tetradymite (Td) traversing cosalite (Cs) and galena (Ga) in two directions. Galena seems to follow grain boundaries of cosalite here.

Plate 13. X430 X-nicols

Lattice-work of tetradymite (Td)-white, in intergrowth of cosalite (Ss) and galena (Ga). All black is galena according to etch reactions.

Plate Y-3 X570

Tetradymite (Td), tellurbismuth (Tel) and hessite (He) in contact.

• Plate Y-2. X200

Tetradymite (Td) lath in cosalite (Cs)-actually intergown with galena. Gold (Au) in alteration after galena and cosalite.

Plate $Y-4$ $X570$ Zig-zag veinlets of gold in hessite.

Plate Y-5 X200 Native gold in hessite (He)

Plate 4 X168 X-nicols

Anisotropic mosaic of hessite and intergrowth of altaite and tellurbismuth.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

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^r 55.

MINERALOOICAL CONTENT of SECTIONS

Harrison Gold - Numbers ©f sections correspond with those of labelled hand specimens.

NUMBER

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