

# British Solomon Islands Protectorate — Colonial Geological Surveys 1947-1956

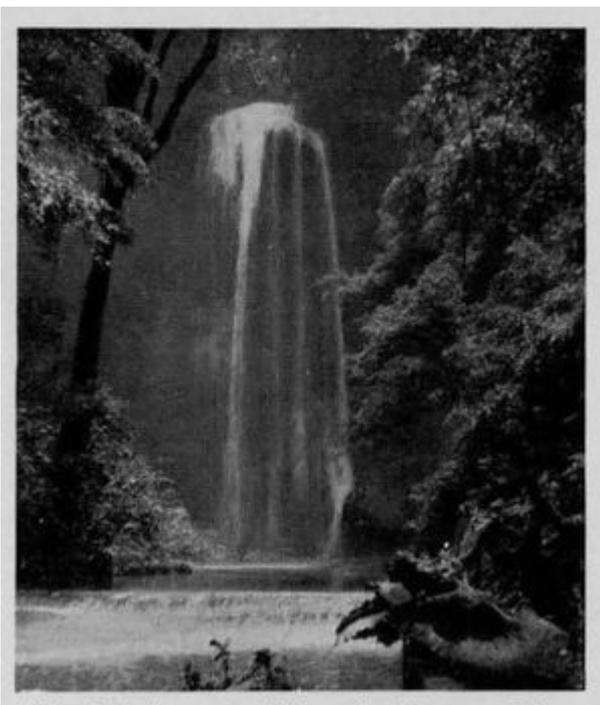
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From Dixey, F. 1957. [Colonial Geological Surveys 1947-1956: a review of progress during the past ten years](#). Colonial geology and mineral resources. Bulletin supplement No. 2. London: HMSO.



Geological Survey of British Solomon Islands. Geological Survey staff, British Solomon Islands. Plate XXIV.

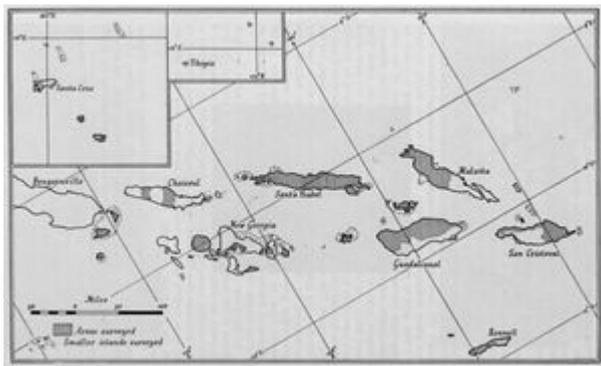


Geological Survey of British Solomon Islands. The 201 ft. waterfall on the Tenaru River (Guadalcanal) over tuffaceous sandstone and conglomerate. Plate XXIV.



Geological Survey of British Solomon

Islands. The Geological Survey's 35 ft. launch, M. V. Noula, used for inter-island travel. Plate XXIV.



Areas surveyed by the Geological Survey Department of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate since 1950. Text-fig. 17.

## British Solomon Islands Protectorate

In 1950, when the Government Geological Survey was first instituted, no mining or prospecting operations were taking place in the Solomon. One senior geologist was appointed to make a preliminary survey and, at the end of 1953, two geologists were added to the staff. In addition to the activities of this Survey, three expeditions have been made by senior members of the geological staff of the University of Sydney. The Department is now reasonably equipped and possesses adequate permanent offices and laboratories that have been built, between expeditions, by the geologists themselves with the assistance of bushmen: and all have been paid for from funds provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. Residences, situated nearby, were completed by contractors in 1955.

Geological mapping has been carried out in Guadalcanal, Ysabel, Florida, Malaita, San Cristoval, the Shortland Islands and the Santa Cruz group. A great deal of valuable knowledge has been gained, and the possibilities of development of economic minerals in the Protectorate have been indicated. Six gold-bearing bodies on Gold Ridge in Guadalcanal were found by the Survey in 1955, thus bringing to a successful conclusion the long search for the source of the alluvial gold in the Sorvohio-Matapona Valley, first discovered by the Spanish explorers nearly 400 years ago. Although most of these bodies are believed to be but minor structures, one of them, over a 16 ft. true width, averaged 15 dwt. gold to the ton, and was sufficiently promising to induce an important mining company to take up the prospection of the area.

Manganese, magnetite, chrysotile asbestos, copper sulphides, chromite, ilmenite, gold, silver, and traces of platinum, nickel, and cobalt have been found, and recent work has confirmed the existence of a mineralised belt some miles in width, stretching in a south-east direction for 70 miles across Guadalcanal, and believed to be the source of minerals found in the streams. The country is rough and covered by dense jungle, but this indication of a major structure controlling mineralisation will be carefully investigated by the Geological Survey, and was only deduced after painstaking systematic mapping following the earlier reconnaissance survey when no lodes were discovered. A recent discovery by the Geological Survey of considerable interest is that of rock phosphate on Bellona Island, which is now in course of investigation.

In the course of the Geological Survey activities, attention has been drawn to the inadequacy of the Admiralty charts of parts of the Protectorate, the need for instruments to record major local earthquakes and microseismic waves, and the need for a gravity survey by submarine in the

Solomons—New Hebrides region. Proposals have been submitted on all these matters, and recommendations have since been made officially to the authorities concerned, both in the United Kingdom and in Australia.

Geological Survey Memoir No. 1 entitled " Geology, Mineral Deposits and Prospects of Mining Development in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate ", by John C. Grover, was published in 1955. An account of the geology of the British Solomon Islands, incorporating the results gained by the 1951 Expedition of the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Sydney, led by Professor C. E. Marshall, has been published in *Colonial Geology and Mineral Resources*, Vol. 6, No. 3. Two 1956 Expeditions, led by Dr. R. L. Stanton and Dr. P. J. Coleman, have provided material for research in Ontario (Canada) and Sydney and full reports are expected during 1957

## **Mineral occurrences**

Asbestos

Chromite

Cobalt

Copper and copper ores

Gold

Ilmenite

Iron and iron ores

Manganese

Nickel

Phosphates

Platinum

Silver

## **British Solomon Islands Protectorate — Staff list**

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