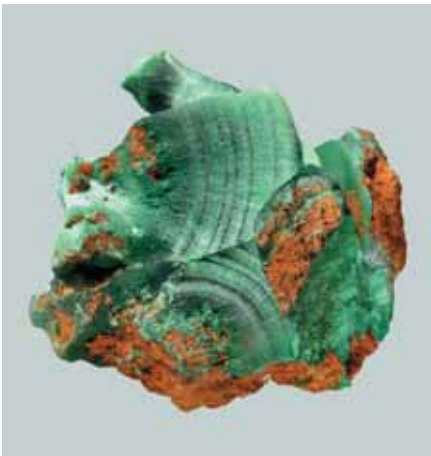




THE HISTORY OF MEDNORUDYANSKOE DEPOSIT

12. Three **malachite** originations: fine grained crust, pale green septaria and late ones - green spherulites.
2.3 cm. Mednorudyanskoe deposit.
Specimen: V.A. and V.I. Popovs #767, collected by N.I. Kozin. Photo: M.B. Leybov.

13. Nodules of zonal split “plush” **malachite** with inclusions of ferruginous clay.
2.0 cm. Mednorudyanskoe deposit.
Specimen: V.A. and V.I. Popovs #705, collected by N.I. Kozin. Photo: M.B. Leybov.



The history of discovery and development of the Mednorudyanskoe mine is inextricably linked with some generations of Demidov family, well known not only on Ural. Nikita Demidovich Antufiev, a Tula armourer, was first and dynasty founder. In 1702, Peter the Great's (Russian Tsar) order put him in the possession of the Nevyansk Factory along with an enclosing area of over 30 km, including Mount Magnitnaya (later named Vysokaya) by the Tagil River. In 1720, Nikita Demidovich's family was promoted to aristocracy and became known from then on as the “Demidovs.” Already at this point, the territory of the Mednorudyanskoe deposit, as well as that of the Verkhnevyisk copper deposit, was used for copper mining (“*Mednaya yama*”/“*Copper pit*”). Although Nikita Demidov was more interested in iron deposits, the state needed copper. So, the Berg-Collegium's order, dated December 20, 1720, requested that “*Nikita Demidov from Tula is to build a copper smelting factory at his own expense and is to smelt copper at the said factory in the Tsar's lands, in the Siberian governorship's Verkhotyrie (county) by the Vyia River, where the copper ore were found.*” The order, requesting the construction of the Vyia copper smelting factory, discussed the building conditions and the compulsory delivery of copper “*to the state's treasury for money production and artillery.*” This is reflected in a series of archival documents of the Tagil Records (Gan'zha, 2000) as well as in the “*Overview of deposits of Tagil-Kushva area*” (Kleimenov et al., 2007). The first copper was produced at the Vyia factory in 1722. However, due to the low copper grade, the factory began to process iron ore from the Vysokaya Mount deposit. During 1716–25, another five factories were built, including the Nizhnetagilsk iron smelting factory.

After Nikita Demidov's death in 1725, his eldest son Akinfy Nikitich inherited all of the factories. In 1733, the Vyia factory, which was reconstructed following a 1729 fire, had already produced 230 pouds¹ (more 3.760 tons) of “*black copper*”, 89,000 pouds (about 1,457 tons) of cast iron and 9,500 pouds (about 155 tons) of iron, producing canons, church bells, copper smelting, cauldrons and pans (Nizhniy Tagil, 1971; Gan'zha, 2000). Akinfii Nikitich was interested in minerals and requested specimens to be sent to him (Demidovsky Vremennik, 1995).

After Akinfy Demidov's death in 1745, his real estate, which then included 77 copper deposits, 18 iron deposits, 24 factories, 64 mills, 29 churches and 1 chapel, plus 36 settlements and villages, was divided between his three sons. Prokopy Akinfievich got the Nevyansk factory, Grigoryi Akinfievich got the Revda and Suksun factories, while Nikita Akinfievich got the Nizhniy Tagil, Chernooistochin, Visimo-Shaitan, Vyia and the two Lai factories, as well as a number of lands across Russia.

In 1762, Nikita Akinfievich Demidov received a land allotment of what was to become the Mednorudyanskoe deposit. The miners consider this year foundational in the Rudyanskoe (Mednorudaynskoe) ore deposit discovery and develop-

¹ 1 poud is 16.38 kg