

**A treatise on  
PROBABILITY → IMPROBABILITY → IMPOSSIBILITY**



As is apparent, I was able to handle this size of gravel (3 cm) with my shovel and wheelbarrow - and I handled 8 tons of it. I could do the same with gravel of size 3.1 cm, 3.2 cm, ..., but at some point (for stones about 15 - 25 cm seen in the lower left corner) this would become difficult as it was easier to load the stones into the wheelbarrow one by one by hand. This I did when using



them for patterns shown in this next picture. I could do the same with stones 25.1 cm, 25.2 cm, etc., and there is no fixed dividing line between the stone sizes for which I could probably still do this and sizes for which it would be impossible.

But the range of such sizes exists and the big boulders two of which are seen in the picture are definitely within it. They weigh between 200-250 kg each and it was impossible for me to lift them - there is no probability, however small, that I could do it; and even if somebody (you, for example) could, it would not be possible with the shovel which would break, and so would the



wheelbarrow (which collapsed when I once loaded four 25 kg bags on it). I could move those boulders (five of them) only by rolling them. This was difficult enough on level ground, and close to the limit of my ability when hauling them up from the backyard which is about 5 m down the slope. I probably could have done the same thing with 250.1, 250.2,..., kg rocks. The result is shown on this picture.

The story did not end here and moved into the impossibility range.

I was looking for a really big boulder on which I could attach our house number. The opportunity arose just after my return from Europe. Excavation was being done nearby and I saw just what I had been looking for in the heap of the excavated material: a granite boulder with one nicely flat side. Its estimated weight was about half a ton and it was impossible for me to 'role' it the 50 m to our driveway and I had to ask the excavator



operator to do it with his machine. I had him deposit it on a wooden board and then, inch by inch, I managed to manipulate it into position with the help of an iron rod. I am sure I could

have done it if the boulder weighted 500 kg + 1 g,



2 g, but the improbability of my ability to do so would eventually become an impossibility. It makes no sense whosoever to talk about a probability that I, or any human being, could move, even one centimeter, a boulder weighing, say 50 tons; to be sure, I am talking about doing it with bare hands or, at most, with a shovel and a 1.5 m iron rod. I am attaching below a picture of the final 'product' which will help you find our place if you have an opportunity to visit us.



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