

REPORTS OF MINING SURVEYORS.

Mr. Drummond's Report.

SIR,—

Gold Fields Department, Mining Survey Office, Lawrence, 1st April, 1865.

I have the honor to forward you the following report on the Tuapeka Gold Field, along with Statistical Tables, showing the amount of Population, value of Mining Plant, number of Agricultural and Mining Leases, Extended Claims, &c.

Since the date of my Report ending 30th September, 1864, this Gold Field has been steadily progressing both in mining and other matters; and though the miners have been working at a great disadvantage, owing to the unusual dryness of the season, the yield of gold has still been up to the average.

The principal scenes of mining operations in the Gabriel's District still continue to be those of the Blue Spur and the spurs of Wetherston's; upon which large areas of ground have been taken up either under the Leasing or Extended Claims Regulations.

As the various claims get opened out and in good working order, the value of shares increase; some shares having lately changed hands varying from five hundred pounds sterling to eleven hundred pounds sterling (£500 to £1100). Water is still very scarce, and although about eight heads have lately been brought in from the Waipori River, the supply is still far below that of the demand. Another race is in course of construction from the branches of the Waipori and head of the Beaumont Rivers, and will in all probability be completed in about four months time, and which will in some measure tend to meet the demand. Water in this district must always command a good price, as it has now been proved that the more water is brought in, the more claims are taken up. The scarcity of water has led some of the enterprising miners to examine the watersheds and sources of the various streams of the district, which has resulted in the formation of a company, who propose to bring in the Deep Stream at a computed distance of about eighty miles in length.

The miners on Wetherston's have almost been at a standstill for water, both owing to the dryness of the season, and also to the bursting of Ward's and Gascoine's dams, from which the chief supply was obtained for Wetherston's.

Both the above sites (Ward's and Gascoine's) are admirably adapted for storing water. A survey has been made and the levels taken for the purpose of erecting two large stone reservoirs, which, when full, will, I am of opinion, keep that portion of the district well supplied with water. The estimated cost of the reservoirs I have put down at fifteen hundred, and six hundred pounds sterling, each.

That a large supply of water is wanted at Wetherston's is an undoubted fact, as the cement has been prospected and found equally as good as that of the Blue Spur, Gabriel's. About forty acres have been taken up, mostly under the Extended Claims Regulations. The depth of the cement when struck in the prospector's claim is twenty-five (25) feet. Owing to the spurs of Wetherston's not having the elevation of those of Gabriel's, and having necessarily less fall, it will be impossible to work a great portion of the cement by means of ground sluicing; but I am in hopes that the deep ground will be prospected, and payable ground may yet be found for raising and sluicing.

The cement from the spurs crosses the flat, and is again found on the Slaughter-yard Hill, and from that on to the next gully; and I am of opinion that the cement or conglomerate will yet be traced through Waitahuna and on to near the Woolshed Diggings. It is now an ascertained fact that all the spurs around Gabriel's, Wetherston's, Waitahuna, and Waipori are more or less auriferous; and taking the large masses of auriferous cement known to exist in this district, the only thing the miners now want is a good supply of water. The scarcity of water having been severely felt this season, has induced several local capitalists to invest; and I am in hopes in course of another twelvemonths to see the district tolerably well supplied with that essential.

In order as much as possible to counteract the scanty supply of water for the hill sluices, reservoirs are being formed (the method usually adopted being that of sluicing out the ground) on or near each of the various claims, so as to store the night water.

The other portions of Gabriel's District are still being worked satisfactorily—Monroe's, Tuapeka Flat, Wetherston's Flat, and adjacent gullies, still afford remunerative employment to a settled population.

Waitahuna District.—Waitahuna District, as elsewhere, has suffered from the dryness of the season, and a limited supply of water. Blocks of good payable ground are still being met with in the old ground in the main gully. Little work has been done on the spurs owing to the want of water. Some good ground has been found about half a mile below the bridge on the Waitahuna River.

Woolshed.—Numbers of the miners of the Woolshed have removed to the Waipori District. Those left are still making good wages in and on the banks of the river.

Waipori.—From a glance at the accompanying statistical tables it will be seen that a comparatively large population has set in at Waipori, most of the workings being on the Waipori Flat and River. The ground is easily worked, being from six to nine feet deep through a fine wash. Each claim is supplied with a water-wheel and California pump, for the purpose of keeping the workings dry. Waipori, I am of opinion, could sustain a large population, as most of the flats and spurs are known to be auriferous.

Pioneer Quartz Mining Company.—The Pioneer Quartz Mining Company is still in active operation. They have lately been engaged sinking a shaft, and a few days since again struck stone at a depth of eighty-eight (88) feet from the surface. The stone looks exceedingly well, and I imagine will yield about two ounces to the ton. The thickness of the stone at present struck is three (3) feet. The finding good stone at the above depth has had the effect of increasing the value of the shares, one or two of which have changed hands at about eight hundred pounds sterling (£800) for a twelfth share of the mine, making a market value of the claim and plant of about ten thousand pounds (£10,000).