

583. You were down there in the palmy days?—Yes.

584. When there was a very large influx of miners, and large fortunes were made?—I do not know about large fortunes.

585. I did not say “kept.” I said “made.” In your experience it is apparently sometimes the case that old workings that have been abandoned are again attempted?—That is so.

586. That has happened pretty often in the mining on the West Coast, for the simple reason that when a further extension has taken place there has been a return of miners to ground that previously was utterly neglected?—Not in all instances, in one or two only. Still, there is always a little extension in the ordinary runs of the old leads where little patches of gold are found. That is how the population is kept going.

587. It would be difficult to say, probably, that any particular locality was entirely played out?—Very difficult.

588. You think, at any rate, that some allowance should be made for the possibility of old workings been revived?—I have acted on that principle.

589. Were you accompanied by other persons when you examined these blocks?—Yes.

590. The same persons who accompanied the last two witnesses? Is that so?—Yes.

591. In fact, there was a party of you who investigated a portion of these blocks on behalf of the company?—Yes.

592. And, no doubt, you compared notes from time to time as you went along?—Yes.

593. How many of you were there altogether?—Sometimes six, sometimes four, and sometimes eight.

594. You say in all cases you would reserve the creeks for a reasonable distance on each side, and that reasonable distance should vary between 2 chains up to 20 chains or more?—If you were to ask me a particular thing, I would refer to my notes, and I could tell you. I cannot say what distance otherwise.

595. It would vary according to circumstances—I will put it that way?—Yes.

596. If you were cutting out the reservation areas, you would not reserve any flats: that is to say, in all rectangular blocks you would follow the course of the country and the gold-workings?—Yes.

596A. And you would only reserve the precise areas you thought it was reasonable to expect that there would be gold-workings?—Exactly, where there has been any possible indication of extension.

597. Judging by what you saw in making your inspection?—Yes.

598. And that only after you had made a complete prospecting of the ground in the whole locality, because you would have to take what would be gold-bearing [and what would not?—That is it.

599. Speaking generally, are there portions of those blocks which have not been prospected, and which have been hatched by you?—Yes.

600. I suppose there are portions of some of those rougher blocks which have not been explored?—I could not say that. I have gone pretty well through all parts of those I have been in.

601. There seems to have been some difference of opinion between you and the others?—Very slight.

602. Take, for instance, the large discrepancy. You put in a reserve of 1,300 acres in Block 59, which has been hatched, and some of the others say it ought not to have been reserved?—Block 59.

603. It is on Plan 3. You told us that you would strike out, or rather put in, a reservation of 1,300 acres, did you not?—Yes.

604. You said you had reasons for that?—The proximity to the line of reefs.

605. You would not feel safe in excluding that 1,300 acres from the reserve?—No.

606. Because it is in close proximity to other workings?—Yes.

607. Would you extend that 1,300 acres, on the same principle, to the south of the line in Block 29 into 61?—I would have to see what the country and formation was like before I would do that, as I do not know what formation and country I would have to deal with.

608. In the 1,300 acres?—I have been here [indicated on map], but not there [indicated on map].

609. Your opinion is that you would not carry the reservation any further without knowing more about the country?—I have not been there.

610. Apparently, the gold-workings in Block 61 come quite as close to the hatched portion as they do in Block 59. What do you say as to that? Is it not probable that it would be safer to admit the whole of the reserves in Block 61?—I would not care to express an opinion on that subject unless I saw the whole of the reserves.

611. On what principle would you define a hard-and-fast boundary in a case like that?—By the way the reefs run, and by the formation and character of the country—whether it is of a sand-stone character or solid country—schist, granite, or limestone. I would judge in that way.

612. How could you see anything like all of these lines without thoroughly exploring and prospecting the country on both sides of that line?—I do not say I could. I would have to see the country before I could do so.

613. Have you any knowledge of any auriferous ground—I do not want you to state any secrets if you have a good thing on—within the hatched portion of Lot 59?—No; I am only going by the bearing of the reefs.

614. You know the country and bearing of the reefs, and think they may run in the 1,300 acres?—Yes.

JOSEPH CASOLANI sworn and examined.

615. *Mr. Jones.*] What are you, Mr. Casolani?—I am a settler.

616. Where?—At the Maruia.